Creative Discipline Education Shaping Entrepreneurial Outcomes in the Creative Industries, a Gender Perspective

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the nature of creative discipline education and how this shaped entrepreneurial outcomes. The research study examined the role that higher education played in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes and preparation for securing work in their chosen industry for students in creative disciplines.

The study undertook to determine three main research objectives:

- To identify factors that influence and contribute to career preparation and potential entrepreneurial identity formation.
- To examine factors in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes and career preparation in creative disciplines in higher education.
- To explore whether there is a gender perspective in the factors shaping entrepreneurial outcomes.

This study straddles research, education, and practice. The methodological framework was developed with the aim of understanding the factors that shape entrepreneurial outcomes within the creative industries and examining how creative discipline in higher education shapes entrepreneurial outcomes from a gender perspective. The study participants included students, practitioners, and higher education creative discipline educators to take a holistic approach to the investigation in answering the research questions. The study is focused on two creative disciplines, architecture and photography.

This study used a mixed-method convergent design approach. The philosophy of critical realism has been applied in this study. The nature and aims of this study lend themselves to a critical realist approach. This philosophical approach contributes towards developing an understanding of how one can move within this structured layer and navigate the ontological structures to progress from student to practitioner, from practitioner to educator, and from educator to practitioner.

Acknowledgements

This PhD study is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Carole Mallia, teacher, researcher, feminist and above all, a dear, much-missed friend.

I would like to start by thanking Birmingham City University for their support and the award of a case studentship. Without this award, I could not have achieved a long-held ambition to undertake a PhD, as it would have been too much of a financial struggle. As a mature student with caring responsibilities, I appreciate the inclusive philosophy of this university, which truly believes that higher education should be open to all and based on merit alone.

I would like to give heartfelt thanks to my supervisory team, especially my lead supervisor, Dr Charlotte Carey, for her unwavering support, guidance, expert tuition and, above all, good nature. I would also like to thank my other supervisor. Professor Mark Gilman and, in the early stages, Professor Cindy Millman.

In addition, I would like to thank all those people who participated in this research study. I am truly grateful for your time and contributions and have complete admiration for you all. Research such as this provides a greater understanding of how best to support future generations of creatives.

Finally, I would like to thank my friends and family. To my former husband Gareth for his support and understanding. My son Reuben has grown from a young child to a teenager during this time. From playing with soft toys to playing Fortnite! I love you very much. Hopefully, I will get some more family time back now.

My friends, you know who you all are, but I want to particularly thank the following people. Rachel Redford, for being such a consistent and wonderful friend. Megan Taylor, who prompted me into action after a few glasses of wine with questions about what I REALLY wanted to do in life. Claire Pointer-Glenhill for her support, insights, and kindness. Bea Carrington for her unwavering support when I was most in need. Plus, all others who are so worthy of a name check, apologies I haven’t named you all.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the research topic, along with the significance and the rationale for the study. The study was situated within the domain of creative disciplines/creative industries. A high proportion of creative practitioners hold higher education degree-level qualifications; additionally, a high proportion of creative practitioners work freelance (Roy, 2016). Given this context, this study examined how creative discipline students' higher education experiences shape their entrepreneurial outcomes. To better understand the construct of being a 'creative', the study explored the interplay between creative identity and entrepreneurial identity to discover motivational push/pull factors and concepts of 'creative identity'. This study sought to find out whether there was a gender difference at play in the experiences of creative practitioners of different genders. It further examined whether there was a gender difference in higher education experiences and work experiences and, if so, how these contribute to the factors that shape entrepreneurial outcomes.

1.2. Rationale for the study

The creative industries are comprised of a high number of creative practitioners who are graduates (Leadbeater and Oakley, 2005). In a report for the Creative Industries Federation, Easton and Caudwell-French found that of creative workers across the sector, 47% are self-employed, compared with 15% across the workforce as a whole (2017:4).

Most creative discipline education degree programmes in the UK do not include formal taught sessions on the topic of 'entrepreneurship', which is largely taught within UK Higher Education Business Schools (Rae et al., 2012). The creative industries remain one of the fastest-growing sectors in the UK (Flew, 2019). Indeed, creative industries are characterised by freelancers, high rates of self-employment and, thereby arguably, entrepreneurship.

This study seeks to contribute to the knowledge of the link between higher education creative discipline education and the factors that shape entrepreneurial outcomes in the creative industries. This study differed from previous contributions as the whole career discourse was examined.

The research methodological framework was designed to capture views from creative discipline students to established creative practitioners working within the industry, as well as contributions from creative discipline educators working in higher education. The study is focused on two creative disciplines for comparison and two different geographical UK regions.

The research explored the factors that shaped creative practitioners’ modes of behaviour and business practice, ensuring that they could work within a freelance, project-based, fast-moving economy. The study explored three research objectives, and the findings of these objectives provided the basis for the unique contribution this study makes to existing knowledge.

The significance of this study was that, by providing a whole-life discourse on the lives of creatives, the full range of factors that shape entrepreneurial outcomes can be examined. These are identified from both the literature and the empirical research conducted:

- The factors that shaped creative practitioners’ entrepreneurial behaviours and enterprising ways of operating and how their university experience contributed to these.
- From the university perspective, how do the curriculum and student experience contribute towards maximising students' preparation for obtaining work in their chosen creative industry, including working self-employed/freelance?
- The research explores whether there is a gender difference in the experiences and opportunities presented to female creative entrepreneurs

or whether they conduct themselves any differently than their male counterparts to operate successfully within their specific chosen creative sector.

The study population included:

1. *Creative discipline students*, exploring their university experience as well as their personal ambitions for success.
2. *Creative practitioners* who had completed a degree in their discipline, reflecting on their childhood experiences and aspirations of being a creative, reflections on their university experiences and how these supported their career, and how they operate within the specific industry.
3. The study population also included *higher education educators* in the two chosen disciplines, exploring their views on how their creative experience shapes how they support students, as well as the wider university experience, such as curriculum design and assessment techniques applied.

Focusing on two creative disciplines, architecture and photography, provided the specific context in which to situate the research, ensuring both breadth and depth to the methodological design of the study. The literature review explored both the specific context of the study and the wider context of the creative industries, higher education creative discipline education, higher education entrepreneurial education, and gender.

The study provided opportunities for the narratives of different voices to be heard within different contexts. These included university students from two different creative disciplines, at three different universities. A range of different creative practitioners, including those who are employed, as well as those who are self-employed and at different career stages, participated. The study also included the voices of university educators, both in terms of their own careers and their experiences of teaching within creative disciplines. The study population was situated in two different regional settings within the United Kingdom - the East Midlands and the West Midlands. This was to counter against factors that may be region-specific in terms of educational opportunities, business opportunities and context. The study population included creative practitioners operating within these two regions. For the student questionnaire survey, three different universities with four different student cohorts (two from each discipline, architecture and photography) were used, providing the depth and breadth of the data spread. The university educators were the heads of departments or the heads of the undergraduate final-year cohorts of the student questionnaire survey population. It is this wide range of voices, along with the range of different contexts and career points that provide richness to the understanding of the full career trajectory and the factors that support and shape it.

1.3. Background to the study

According to figures from the UK government's Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the creative industries contributed £111.7 billion to the UK in 2018, equivalent to £306 million every day (Department for Digital, 6 February 2020). According to creativeindustries.co.uk, these figures indicate that the gross value added (GVA) for the creative industries is growing more than five times faster than the average rate of the UK economy. The website also reported that the creative industries are made up of either freelancers or small businesses, with 95% of creative businesses employing fewer than ten people. Besides the small-scale nature of creative businesses, they are also spread across a wide range of sub-sectors. As of 2020 the UK government include the following sectors in their calculations of the GVA of creative industries (Gov.uk, 8 December 2011):

- Advertising and marketing
- Architecture
- Crafts
- Product design, graphic design, and fashion design
- Film, TV, video, radio, and photography
- IT, software, video games, and computer services
- Publishing and translation
- Museums, galleries, and libraries

- Music, performing arts, visual arts, and cultural education.

These sectors, according to Prospects (2021), employ more than two million people, a figure which is growing. All these figures indicate that the creative industries make a positive contribution to the UK economy and offer job opportunities to the UK labour force. It should be noted that these figures are from pre-Covid-19, during which the creative industries, along with other industries such as the hospitality sector, were negatively impacted. Given the significance of the creative industries to the UK economy, it is therefore imperative to gain a better understanding of the role of higher education in supporting creative discipline students to forge a successful career within these industries, including working freelance. Despite these historical, pre-Covid-19 contributions to the UK economy, little is known about the economic value and performance of individual creative workers, nor, most significantly, the role that higher education plays in supporting student transition, particularly female students, into the creative industries and how higher education shapes students' entrepreneurial formation. In 2019, DCMS Sectors contributed £291.9 billion to the UK economy. This was 14.8% of total UK GVA, up from 14.5% in 2018 (measured in current prices). Between 2017 and 2018, the creative industries' Gross Value Added (GVA) grew by 7.4% in real terms, which is more than five times the growth rate of the UK economy, which saw a 1.4% increase overall (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport 19 February 2021).

Creative industries are largely made up of small companies and micro-businesses, the majority of which employ fewer than ten people, as mentioned above (Prospects, 2021). Much of the work is project-based with definitive deadlines. There is still a concentration of project opportunities for creative jobs and creative project opportunities in London, but more recent years have seen a move towards more opportunities being located elsewhere in the UK. The creative industries outside of IT, software and computer services are not largely comprised of large companies but instead are structured around networks and SMEs working on projects together.

There is much criticism of the lack of investment and policy initiatives within schools, especially primary schools in England, to teach arts, music, and drama. All these subjects are not part of the core curriculum, alongside Maths and English, but are instead offered as complementary subjects. Given the robust figures for the UK creative economy, one could question the government's strategic approach. Why is the route from creative learning and arts education not better supported, given the link to economic success? It could be suggested that creative learning is not just a route into the arts but is also essential to the UK economy.

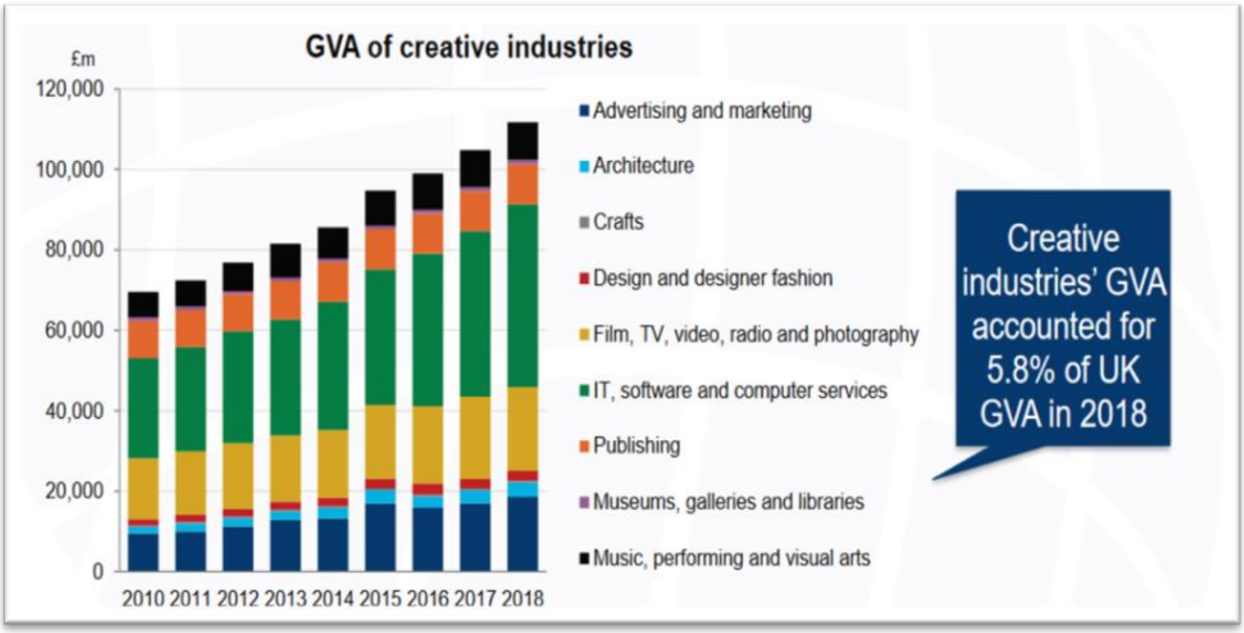

Figure 1.1. Gross Value Added (GVA) of Creative Industries (Oxford Economics 2020 Data DCMS).

Figure 1.1 above demonstrates there is a small but steady increase in GVA growth in nearly all creative industries. In Figure 1.1, note that the sector with the highest GVA growth is IT, software, and computing services.

While this data is pre-Covid-19, it should be noted that all the data collection and analysis for this study was completed before the pandemic hit the UK. Many industries have been adversely affected by interruptions to business trading and the subsequent downturn in the economy. Creative industries with music, theatre, movies, and other cultural venues were badly affected by mandated closures during periods of national lockdown. There have been restrictions on social gatherings and the implementation of social distancing rules, which have impacted the way people live and work.

The government's Cultural Recovery Fund, coordinated by the Arts Council England, provided £160 million in funding to organisations and individuals who otherwise would have likely ceased trading. Another £261 million is being made available to enable creative organisations and individuals to restart work once restrictions are lifted. In terms of supporting the longer-term recovery, according to the Arts Council, an additional £300 million was added to the Culture Recovery Fund, details of which were not yet known at the time of writing this thesis (02 April 2021). This impact on the creative industries has caused a major interruption to many creative businesses. Given that a high proportion of creatives work freelance on a project-by-project basis, they have been badly impacted with regards to both their immediate economic needs in being able to generate an income, as well as their long-term economic needs in being able to rebuild and re-establish their business in an unknown, potentially fragile economy. It is more imperative than ever to understand the motivations of creatives and how they operate, and most significantly, to develop an understanding of the factors that drive them towards being successful and shape their entrepreneurial intentions. It is their entrepreneurial modes of behaviour that are likely to be most needed as the country comes out of the pandemic and the creative industries, and other industries, seek to trade again. A better understanding of the role of higher education is required to ensure the creatives of the future are equipped to drive the continued success of the creative industries.

1.4. Aims and objectives of the research study

The research aimed to provide meaningful insights into how higher education shapes entrepreneurial outcomes within the creative industries, the factors that contribute to career and potential entrepreneurial identity formation, and how these are influenced. The research further sought to explore whether there is a gender difference in the factors shaping entrepreneurial outcomes.

The research study had three main research objectives:

- To identify factors that influence and contribute to career preparation and potential entrepreneurial identity formation.
- To examine factors in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes and career preparation in creative disciplines in higher education.
- To explore whether there is a gender perspective in the factors shaping entrepreneurial outcomes.

1.5. Rationale for research design

The importance of higher education in supporting students' transitions into employment and the development of employability skills is universally recognised. How this is achieved is the subject of many studies and is determined by concepts such as core/subject-specific work skills and generic transferable skills. This study was concerned with a better understanding of how creative disciplines within higher education shape entrepreneurial outcomes in creative practitioners. Whilst most previous studies have focused upon one aspect of life experience, such as post-graduation or scrutiny of just one creative industry, this study was designed to examine creative practitioners' whole life discourses, from childhood interests to later-in-life career aspirations and achievements.

1.6. Differences in professional/career structure in architecture and photography

In the UK, architecture is a regulated profession, meaning that individuals must be registered with the Architects Registration Board (ARB) to allow them to practise using the title 'architect'. ARB is the statutory regulator and competent authority for architects in the UK. As a regulator, it is ARB's role to maintain the Register of Architects and to ensure that standards within the profession are consistently maintained for the benefit of the public and architects. Typically, if studying in the UK, the route to becoming a qualified architect is to complete a degree recognised by the Architecture Registration Board (ARB), followed by one year of practical work experience (often referred to as 'Part 1'). This is then followed by a further two-year, full-time university course, such as a BArch, Diploma, MArch, or a year of practical training in practice (often referred to as 'Part 2'). This process is finalised through a final qualifying exam ('Part 3'). Upon successful completion of all three components, individuals are awarded Chartered Architect status, registered with ARB as a practising architect. According to data on statistica.com, as of 2021, there were approximately 51.1 thousand people employed as architects in the United Kingdom, compared with 53.5 thousand in 2010. Data from the UK government's National Statistics used to provide an estimate of the contribution of DCMS Sectors to the UK economy show that in 2018, there were approximately 81,000 people classified as employed in architecture and approximately 31,000 people classified as self-employed in architecture.

Whilst the career structure of the architecture sector is very rigid and regulated, the career structure of the photography sector is much more informal. There are no formal education requirements or the need to meet regulatory standards. Photographers can select to join professional associations such as The Association of Photographers and The Royal Photographic Society if they wish. A portfolio is designed to showcase a photographer's work and style, and they must undertake plenty of networking (prospects.ac.uk, March 2022). There is no requirement to hold a degree in photography/visual arts or any other discipline. Advice to people wanting to develop a photography career usually involves ideas on how to develop their work, get themselves noticed, and expand their network (Guardian Careers, 24 July 2012). Whilst a degree in photography can be useful in terms of developing creative skills, technical skills, and business skills (prospect.ac.uk, March 2022), having one is neither an essential requirement nor a barrier to career progression. There are a range of photography specialisms; these include commercial photographer, fashion photographer, sports photographer, wedding photographer, and photojournalist (indeed.com). Data for the number of people working as photographers is difficult to obtain as photographers are amalgamated with other related creative sectors. The DCMS figures include the following sectors combined: Film, TV, video, radio, and photography. Data from the UK government's National Statistics used to provide an estimate of the contribution of DCMS Sectors to the UK economy show that in 2018, there were approximately

149,000 people classified as employed in these sectors (film, TV, radio, and photography) and approximately 97,000 people classified as self-employed in these sectors (film, TV, radio, and photography).

Given the combination of professions included in these figures, it is not easy to make direct comparisons between the two sectors, architecture and photography; however, it would appear the ratio of people working freelance is much higher in the photography sector (and related sectors) than in the architecture sector. Comparing the career structures of both sectors highlights some key differences. There are no formal or regulatory requirements for a career as a photographer, aside from the cost of equipment; therefore, the barriers to entry are limited. In theory, at least, appreciating the very competitive nature of the sector, one can start working as a photographer with a reasonable camera, a portfolio to showcase work, and a network of potential clients. In contrast, the career structure of the architecture sector is very rigid, with significant requirements for both time and money to be spent before one's career even starts. The regulatory body ARB surveyed its members, recognising the need to modernise initial education and training for architects (ARB, June 2022). Findings in the survey highlighted the need to move away from the current three-part structure to develop an outcomes-based approach, as well as more specific proposals on how ARB can reform the current regulatory requirements to enable more innovation and flexibility, as well as support diversity (ARB, June 2022).

1.7. Outline of the thesis

The rest of the thesis is structured as follows:

Chapter 2. Literature Review. The literature review synthesised three distinct but interconnected areas of literature: creative discipline education, factors that shape entrepreneurial outcomes, creative industries, and these areas from a gendered perspective. The interconnectedness of these four areas provides a robust foundation for the study.

Chapter 3. Methodology and methods. This chapter discusses the methodological framework and the data collection methods applied in the study.

Chapter 4, Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 contain *findings and discussion*. The study was structured to weave all three main research objectives across all three phases of the study. Within each of these discussion and findings chapters, the findings are illustrated and illuminated with discussion, and the narrative is interwoven throughout. The presentation of findings took a thematic approach. Rather than have a chapter of specific findings and then a chapter of discussion, the researcher combined the analysis, findings, and discussion.

Chapter 4. Early career journeys from childhood into higher education and the formation of an emergent creative identity. This chapter is focused upon the participants' journeys into higher education and the factors that influenced their decisions to forge a career in the creative industries.

Chapter 5. Exploring creative entrepreneurs' career journeys from higher education to creative practitioner. This chapter focuses on the second group of participants, the creative practitioners. It explores factors that support entrepreneurial formation and concepts of creative identity. The research aimed to provide meaningful insights into how higher education shapes entrepreneurial outcomes within the creative industry. The chapter also explores the factors that contribute to career and potential entrepreneurial identity formation and how this is influenced.

Chapter 6 Educators in creative disciplines' views on the factors that shape students' entrepreneurial outcomes. This chapter focuses on the third group of participants, the higher education creative discipline educators. It explores the role of educators in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes and how they influence student concepts of creative identity. The research explored the concept of the educators' own creative identity, their experience of being a practitioner and how this links to the student experience.

Chapter 7. *Discussion and conclusions*. This final chapter brings the findings together and highlights the significance of the study.

1.8. Summary of this chapter

This chapter has provided a background and rationale for the study and the context in which the study sits, including a precis of the economic significance of the creative industries. The rationale for methods is described together with an introduction to the study population. The aim and research objectives are outlined. Methodological and theoretical contributions have been highlighted, providing some insights that emerged from the research findings. The chapter concludes with a detailed overview of the structure of the whole thesis.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This literature review examined three distinct but interconnected areas of literature: creative industries, creative discipline education, and entrepreneurship. The study examined these areas from a gendered perspective. This literature review provided a theoretical framework based upon a body of literature including academics working in the following fields. First, the study looked at entrepreneurship education (EE) (Bae et al., 2014; Hahn et al., 2020; Matlay and Carey, 2007; Matlay, 2008; Matlay, 2019; Rae et al., 2012; O'Connor, 2013; Oosterbeek, Praag and Ijsselstein, 2010; Ratten and Jones, 2021a; Ratten and Jones, 2021b; Wright, 2018) and creative industries (Bridgstock, 2011; Carey and Naudin, 2006; Carey and Birmingham City University, Faculty of Business, 2013; Flew, 2019; Hartley, 2005; Henry, 2007; Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Throsby, 2007), in general. Second, the study looked at entrepreneurship education features within creative disciplines and examined the relationships between EE and gender (Carter, 2000; Jones, S., 2015; Martin, Jerrard and Wright, 2019; Wilson, Kickul and Marlino, 2007). Third, this study also integrated existing knowledge by identifying the historical and social context of factors that shape entrepreneurial outcomes within the creative industries from a gender perspective; for example, this includes female entrepreneurship (Ahl, 2004; Carter, 2000; Carter and Shaw, 2006; McAdam, 2013; Marlow and Carter, 2004; Marlow and Patton, 2005; Marlow and McAdam, 2013; Marlow and Swail, 2014) and entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977a; Bandura, 1997b; Boyd and Vozikis, 1994; Dempsey and Jennings, 2014).

2.1.1. The approach

The literature came from peer-reviewed journals and academic books, with some references to grey literature from conference papers and government reports. The review of the literature took the form of searches using keywords (“entrepreneurial outcomes”, “entrepreneur”, “entrepreneurial education”, “creative industries”, and “gender”) in library databases to identify suitable sources, as well as identifying sources through the bibliography from the articles and books previously identified.

An initial observation when exploring this topic was that there was a marked paucity of publications in the specific areas where these fields overlapped. While this is perhaps not surprising, much research relating to the creative industries sector is made up of small-scale studies, frequently sub-sector specific or with an entrepreneurial policy focus. These factors are arguably problematic in terms of making general assumptions about the existing knowledge base. To address this a methodological approach was taken when searching for data, noting the interdisciplinary nature of the topic and the need for a multiple-focus approach for this study, as well as for future research.

2.1.2. Literature search strategy and aims

The strategy for the literature review was to examine literature in the following interconnected research areas: creative industries, entrepreneurship, and where gender features in both. These areas and the links between them are illustrated the below diagram (Figure 2.1.). The literature search aimed to provide context and seek existing knowledge to inform the study. The literature was reviewed by using keyword searches in library databases based upon a relevance tree, as identified in the below diagram (Figure 2.1.). The review also included sources in the reference list and bibliography from the articles and books which had been previously identified.

The study had three main research objectives:

- To identify factors that influence and contribute to career preparation and potential entrepreneurial identity formation.
- To examine factors in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes and career preparation in creative disciplines in higher education.

- To explore whether there is a gender perspective in the factors shaping entrepreneurial outcomes.

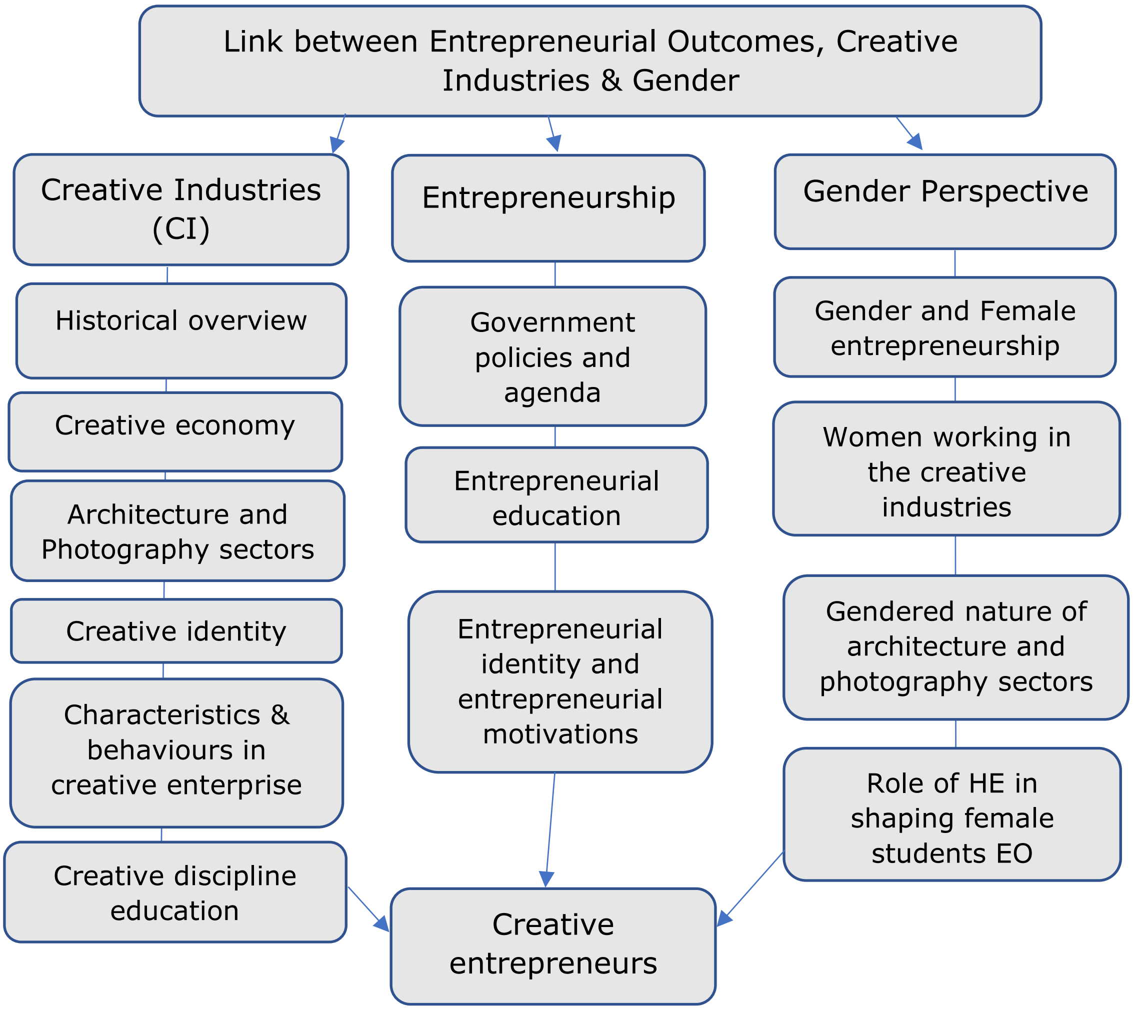
Link between Entrepreneurial Outcomes, Creative Industries & Gender
Creative Industries (CI)
Entrepreneurship
Gender Perspective
Historical overview
Creative economy
Architecture and Photography sectors
Creative identity
Characteristics & behaviours in creative enterprise
Creative discipline education
Government policies and agenda
Entrepreneurial education
Entrepreneurial identity and entrepreneurial motivations
Gender and Female entrepreneurship
Women working in the creative industries
Gendered nature of architecture and photography sectors
Role of HE in shaping female students EO
Creative entrepreneurs

Figure 2.1. Relevance tree demonstrating the key word search terms. Researcher 2023

The literature review is structured following the above diagram (Figure 2.1.) Firstly, a precis of the literature on creative industries is presented on the left side of the diagram. Secondly, an examination of the literature on entrepreneurship follows in the middle section of the diagram. Thirdly, exploring the literature on a gendered perspective is shown on the right-hand side of the diagram. The main challenge encountered by the researcher was that most of the literature was the result of studies within one creative industry or with a focus on entrepreneurial policy.

2.2. Creative Industries

According to figures from the UK government's Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the creative industries contributed £111.7 billion to the UK in 2018, equivalent to £306 million every day. According to creativeindustries.co.uk, these figures indicate that the gross value added (GVA) for the creative industries is growing more than five times faster than the average rate of the UK economy. They also reported that the creative industries are made up of either freelancers or small businesses, with 95% of creative businesses employing fewer than ten people. Furthermore, due to the small-scale nature of creative businesses, they are also spread across a wide range of sub-sectors. As of 2020, the UK government include the following sectors in to their calculations of the GVA of the creative industries:

- Advertising and marketing
- Architecture
- Crafts
- Product design, graphic design, and fashion design
- Film, TV, video, radio, and photography
- IT, software, video games, and computer services
- Publishing and translation
- Museums, galleries, and libraries
- Music, performing arts, visual arts, and cultural education.

These sectors, according to Prospects (2021), employ more than two million people, a figure which is growing. All these figures indicate that the creative industries make a positive contribution to the UK economy and offer job opportunities to the UK labour force. It should be noted that these figures are pre-Covid-19, during which the creative industries, along with other industries, such as the hospitality sector, were negatively impacted.

2.2.1. Historical overview of the creative industries

In 1986, the Greater London Council (GLC) was abolished in a political move to disperse resources from centralised power beyond London to several other metropolitan authorities and residual bodies. These bodies lacked the profile, ambition, and resources of the GLC (O'Connor, 2010). Throughout the 1980s, there was a seismic shift of focus for local authorities towards economic development agencies. These agencies intersected with arts funding agencies and struggled with an expanded agenda and reduced resources (Oakley, 2004). Following what was believed at the time to be the collapse of traditional manufacturing industries, the economic development agencies focused their initiatives on attracting small/medium enterprises and being business-friendly (Pratt, 2008). This also meant that culture, previously seen as a marginal expenditure, became part of the policy and recognised as a potential economic resource (Gibbs, 2008). There followed an emergence of a range of economic initiatives from freelancers, small businesses, and larger corporate industries that were providing a range of cultural products or services. These often operate within a local or regional network (O'Connor, 2010). The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) created in 1997 is a department of government, with responsibility for culture and sport in England, and some aspects of the media throughout the UK, such as broadcasting. The creation of a central government department with responsibility for the creative industries meant that there was now a focus on the creative industries being recognised, with a need for a greater focus on viable government policy objectives (Evans, 2009). These different influences saw the emergence of cultural cities driven by the wide-scale urban transformation which included arts space, cultural venues, and public spaces (Mulgan and Worpole, 1986; Landry, 2000; Landry, 2006; Landry, 2008). This apparent boom in the creative industries' position in the economic landscape in the 1990s included much debate about what was and what was not a creative industry. There was much politicking from the DCMS and others around the inclusion of the dot.com industry, which underwent a dramatic economic increase at that time, to seek support from the Treasury. Much of this debate only led to confusion about what was and what was not included in terms of creative industries (Gibbs, 2008; Hartley, 2005). A Creative Industries Taskforce published the Creative Industries Mapping Document (1998, revised edition 2001). This established a foundational definition: the creative industries are 'those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent which have the potential for job and wealth creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property' (DCMS 1998:3). Firstly, this definition is valuable because it mainstreams the economic value of culture, media, and design. Secondly, the definition brings together a convergence of a range of sectors that have not typically been linked to each other (Hartley et al., 2012).

Most recent developments in mobile communication technologies and particularly the implications of the internet have transformed the debate on the creative industries. Access to local and global markets has dramatically increased with opportunities for distribution and marketing opportunities via the use of websites and social media (Garnham, 2005). For creatives, this has also led to increased opportunities for networking and collaboration which have transformed the way most creatives do business. What the future holds for the debates on what this means for individuals, creative business communities, and cultural policies remains to be seen. Since the 1990s, the creative industries have been heralded as some of the fastest-growing industries, providing valuable economic and social contributions to society (Henry, 2007).

2.2.2. Creative economy

The highlighted economic figures discussed in Chapter 1 do not indicate the wider significant impact that the creative industries make on the UK economy. Firstly, the creative industries create local sustainable jobs (De Beukelaer and Spence, 2019). There is a dependency on creative industries to work in networks to be economically sustainable; for example, television programme makers need graphic designers, actors, and musicians (Granger, 2020). As these sectors are more regionally networked, they are less likely to fall prey to the ups and downs of the global economy than large multinationals (Hartley, 2005). This use of local networks creates a high level of internal trade as they often network with collaborators in the same city. A combination of growth and the building of local networks creates employment opportunities (De Beukelaer and Spence, 2019).

Secondly, creative practitioners contribute to the business sector by developing unique business processes and ways of working; for example, the prominence of team-based working means that people develop trust with each other quickly. Limited resources and project-based work means creative industries utilise the concept of 'value-added' activities and are constantly looking to the future for new business opportunities. These businesses are built upon the foundation of their commercial application of creativity. It has been suggested that companies outside the creative industries could learn from these ways of developing and working (Hesmondhalgh, 2013).

Thirdly, creative practitioners develop a *new model of work,* especially exploiting the advantages of new technologies and communications. Early research indicated that within the creative industries, there are three forces at play which inter-relate values, technology, and economics (Leadbeater and Oakley, 2005). The portfolio nature of creative industry business ventures creates a trade-off between autonomy and job security. Thereby, creatives develop a career as a portfolio of projects, contacts, and skills that may become increasingly important in other sectors of the economy (Porfírio, Carrilho and Mónico, 2016).

Fourthly, through *regional and urban development,* cultural industries, along with creative entrepreneurs, play a critical role in reviving large cities that suffered economic decline (Evans, 2009; Pratt, 2008). As a result, creative industries are more likely to be clustered in cities. Creative business ventures take over offices, warehouses, and factories left empty by the decline in older city-based industries. Employment in creative industries is primarily metropolitan; about 65 per cent of the original production in cultural industries takes place in cities (Leadbeater and Oakley, 2005).

Fifthly, *through social cohesion and social elevation,* as indicated above, the creative and cultural impact upon cities promotes social cohesion and a sense of belonging. Art, culture, and sport are meeting places for people in an ever diversified, fragmented, and unequal society. There are some challenges; graduates make up a higher proportion of creative venture entrepreneurs and there are very few creative entrepreneurs from ethnic minorities (Noonan, 2015;

Taylor and Littleton, 2016; Taylor and Littleton, 2008d). Furthermore, this growth and social cohesion is not evenly spread across the country, as London takes up a far larger share of the jobs in cultural and creative industries (Hartley, 2005).

The increase in the sector, both in volume and range of sub-sectors, has by extension meant a rise in the numbers and range of people working in the creative industries. These workers need to be able to have the skills and know-how to monetize their creative outputs and create a sustainable income and business through their efforts and enterprise. The headline figures about the UK creative economy do not convey the nuanced differences between sectors of the creative industries or the regional differences in economic outputs (Pratt, 2008). Indeed, the creative economy is not static and universal, either within the UK or globally. Creative sectors operate unequally, dependent upon opportunities for distribution and an asymmetrical power/value structure of the key organisations and networks in which they are operating (Pratt and Jeffcutt, 2009). The concept of innovation and creativity is seen as being primarily located in an individual, for example, a 'musician' or the 'artist' (Shane and Nicolaou, 2015; Leonard, 2007), ignoring the production chain activity separating themselves from the arena of corporate production and industry (ibid). Indeed, it is the performance aspect of the nature of creative work that leads Warhurst to develop the term 'aesthetic labour' (2001).

Most creative workers tend to cluster or co-locate together, thereby making use of opportunities for networking and exhorting economic potential. It is the harnessing of this collaborative economic potential that brought about the development of the concept of creative cities in the 1990s (Comunian, 2011). The use of initiatives such as the European City of Culture (ECC) acted as a catalyst for politicians to maximise the concept of creative industries, bringing change in terms of both economic and cultural benefits to urban spaces (Pratt and Jeffcutt, 2009). This is built upon the concept of how creative industries can bring about economic and cultural value and performance. These creative cities and creative clusters developed in urban areas such as Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, and Glasgow (Hartley, 2005). These initiatives were seen as an opportunity to navigate a route away from the economic decline due to deindustrialization (Granger, 2020). To be successful, these creative cities were as much about the importance of the cultural infrastructure as the public/private financial investments. To be economically and creatively active, the networks and interactions between creative practitioners are as important as the publicly supported cultural sectors and the cultural infrastructure of the city (Comunian, 2011). The concept of a creative/cultural quarter and creative cities is familiar to us now. Together with the inclusion of computer software and design as part of the creative industries, it increased both the economic and political significance of information science in the 1990s (Garnham, 2005).

Aside from the computer software and design sector, most creative practitioners within other creative sectors do not see economic evidence of this exponential economic growth. The paradox is that creative industries are said to be contributors to the GVA of the economy. This is down to the more lucrative sectors such as the gaming, music and film industries, all of which are dominant and largely economically successful in the UK (Granger, 2020). However, many individual creative practitioners do not generate sufficient revenue to cover their costs, let alone make a profit (De Beukelaer and Spence, 2019). Nevertheless, it follows that politicians and policymakers make use of economic data to make a political case for public support for the arts (Throsby, 2010). The creative industries need to be understood through both the cultural enrichment of society and the economic benefits they bring. It is only when the unique set of creative and innovative outcomes are best harnessed that they can be a source of competitive advantage to the UK economy.

2.2.3 Architecture and Photography Sectors

The architecture and photography sectors offer an intriguing comparison, with architecture contributing to urban infrastructure and being significantly influenced by political decisions, while photography contributes to the visual arts and operates with less burden from political decisions (Gibb, 2002). Examining the structural differences between these industries sheds light on how entrepreneurial behaviour can be shaped.

Entrepreneurial behaviour, often associated with specific personality traits such as opportunity-seeking, initiative-taking, intuitive decision-making, and risk tolerance, is contextual (Ratten, 2014). Individuals interact with their environments to seize opportunities, and in the architecture and photography sectors, the context is shaped by structural, access-related, and cultural factors (Maritz and Donavan, 2015).

Context-dependent business solutions in creative entrepreneurship emerge from the interplay of materiality (in architecture, the physical buildings), social relations management, and personal resources (Hill, 2020). The architecture sector, closely tied to the male-dominated construction industry, experiences economic outcomes influenced by related industries. Economic downturns, which impact the construction industry, lead to distinct periods of 'boom and bust' in architecture (Caven et al., 2012).

In contrast, the photography sector, with its diverse applications, is less reliant on other sectors in terms of economic conditions, making it less vulnerable to economic fluctuations. Social contexts play a crucial role, particularly for photographers who rely on networking to gain commissions (Chetty et al., 2014). Social interactions contribute to entrepreneurs evolving their behaviour and finding new ways of working (Granovetter, 1992).

For freelancers in both sectors, psychological effects include an enhanced sense of independence and motivation associated with entrepreneurship, but this may be more relevant for photographers due to the nature of their work compared to architects, who are more likely to be employees (Ferreira et al., 2017).

Locus of Control (LoC), a psychological characteristic associated with entrepreneurship, suggests that individuals with a high internal LoC believe they can control their life and career path. Entrepreneurs typically exhibit higher LoC

(Rauch and Frese, 2007; Brockhaus and Horwitz, 1986; Hansemark, 1998). This aligns with the choice of a freelance career, such as photography, indicating high internal LoC. In contrast, individuals in careers like architecture may experience more external LoC, influenced by factors such as luck, the way they fit into an organisation, unconscious bias, and equality of opportunities.

In both sectors, creative workers need to exhibit enterprising behaviour for a successful career pathway. The interplay of personality traits, contextual factors, and psychological characteristics adds depth to understanding how individuals navigate entrepreneurial paths in the dynamic landscapes of architecture and photography.

2.2.4. Creative Identity.

Randles and Ballantyne (2018) propose that creative identity, a construct influenced by both psychological and sociological factors, can be empirically measured, considering creativity as a function of identity. The formation of creative identity involves both extrinsic motivations, such as financial gain, and intrinsic motivations, reflecting the inner drive of creative practitioners for artistic creation (Frey and Jegen, 2001).

Creative practitioners often grapple with perceived tensions between art and commerce, attempting to harmonize extrinsic motivations with intrinsic ones while maintaining artistic integrity and freedom in commercial operations (Schediwy, Bhansing, and Loots, 2018; Beech et al., 2016; Coulson, 2012). Umney and Kretsos, (2014) found in their study on young musicians that creatives can successfully combine both creative and entrepreneurial elements in a synergetic manner. This aligns with Uddin et al.'s (2019) findings, indicating the significant influence of employees' creative personal identities on their innovative behaviours in the information technology service industry.

The relationship between engaging in creative activities, producing creative outputs, and the formation of creative identity is robust, as evidenced by studies on music teachers (Randles and Ballantyne, 2018). However, the link between engaging in creative activities and contributing to entrepreneurial identity is not universally absolute for all creative practitioners. Some, particularly in artistic fields, continue to pursue 'pure art', driven by romantic notions of artistic freedom (McRobbie, 1998). Coulson's (2012) study on musicians revealed that many did not aspire to be entrepreneurs; their primary goal was to make a living from their creative talents. In this version of creative identity, artistic freedom takes precedence, often leading to low income and job insecurity.

Coulson's study suggested that musicians sought income through a combination of freelance work, live performances, music teaching, income-related payments from music recordings, and low-paid casual jobs, often in the hospitality sector. This representation of creative identity, emphasizing artistic freedom and low income, may perpetuate the notion that creative work is precarious and lacks economic viability (Taylor and Littleton, 2008a; Gregg, 2011). This perspective, emphasizing artistic pursuits over economic benefits, contributes to the fragility of the concept of creative identity. However, it also poses a potential barrier, deterring some individuals from pursuing creative work or studying creative subjects at the university level, particularly if economic benefits are not perceived.

The idea that creative work should generate economic benefits, among other advantages, is essential for attracting a diverse range of individuals to the creative industries, helping address the underrepresentation of certain groups in this sector (Taylor and Littleton, 2012).

2.2.5. Characteristics and behaviours in creative enterprise

The academic literature on creative entrepreneurship research significantly contributes to our understanding of various aspects such as entrepreneurial behaviour, context, motivation, development, resources, diversity, and classification. It offers insights into coopetition practices, the reciprocal relationship between place and entrepreneurship, and the coexistence of social and economic goals (Pret and Cogan, 2018). Despite these contributions, there are inherent tensions between the concepts of 'creative' and 'industries', posing challenges to achieving a harmonious partnership. Individual creatives often struggle to align themselves with the large-scale industrial enterprise, feeling a disconnect from this framework (Hartley, 2005). One challenge for creatives is the necessity of commercialising their work through the application of enterprise development principles, requiring a delicate balance between artistic, financial, and self-development considerations (O’Cinneide and Henry, 2007).

Hartley et al. (2013) suggest that artists and entrepreneurs share innate similarities as agents of change in cultural and economic systems. Both exhibit high motivation and risk tolerance, driven by complex desires such as recognition, status, self-actualization, lifestyle, and material rewards. Creatives face the challenge of transforming their ideas into viable enterprises, and while the characteristics of creative entrepreneurs may be unique, they also share generic entrepreneurial traits such as risk-taking (O Cinneide and Henry, 2007). De Bruin (ed. Henry, 2007) even suggests interchangeability between the terms 'artist' and 'creative entrepreneur.' However, studies, like Naudin's research on craftswomen (2020), reveal that while creatives acknowledge their high levels of expertise, they may be hesitant to recognise their entrepreneurial competencies.

Creative industries are characterised by many micro-businesses that heavily rely on entrepreneurial endeavours, as they are less competitive on the advantages of scale and scope. The quality of entrepreneurship within the creative industries significantly influences the sector's viability and dynamics. Creative individuals must navigate the challenge of developing sustainable economic ventures by monetizing creative ideas in a consumer economy, aligning with Schumpeter's (2003) definition of an entrepreneur. Aggestam (ed. Henry, 2007) emphasises that the concept of art-entrepreneur involves leveraging interrelated resources toward the commodification of new ideas, contributing to the growth of the creative industries beyond state funding dependence (Rae, ed. Henry 2007).

Hartley (2005) suggests that the recent growth of creative industries is underpinned by the concept of 'individuals as citizens', where individuals develop their identities through a combination of private and public influences. This idea has gained prevalence with the rise of bloggers, vloggers, and social media, subtly promoting various creative and cultural outputs to persuade citizens to procure them. The social, cultural, and economic conditions influencing individuals' choices and consumption of cultural and creative goods have led to increased demand and revenue for the creative industries (Garnham, 2005; Pratt and Jeffcutt, 2009). This surge in demand has created opportunities for self-employed creatives, freelancers, and micro-businesses, who are often engaged in multiple roles simultaneously (Leadbeater and Oakley, 2005).

The music industry, as studied by Aggerstam (in ed. Colette, 2007), exemplifies the entrepreneurial-venturing process, where creativity and innovation are crucial for maintaining a competitive advantage in a global environment (Hartley et al., 2013). Creatives transform symbolic and social entrepreneurial capital into economic entrepreneurial capital through situated conversions and practices (Hill, 2020; Pret, Shaw, and Drakopoulou Dodd, 2016). Motivations play a vital role in creatives' choices and practices, requiring a delicate balance between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (Bilton, Eikhof, and Gilmore, 2020). The project-based nature of creative industries fosters a flexible approach to work opportunities and ways of working, often relying on networks for project completion and reputation maintenance (Culpepper, 2018).

Professional networks in creative industries are considered closed networks, providing advantages to members through social cohesion and communication facilitation, reducing opportunistic behaviour (Lioukas and Voudouris, 2020). The dynamic and competitive nature of creative industries necessitates adaptability, flexibility, and a focus on developing sustainable and viable business models resilient to technological and social change (Rae, ed. Henry, 2007). The absence of job security for self-employed creatives fosters a future-focused approach, relying on networks and horizon scanning for future opportunities (Bilton, Eikhof, and Gilmore, 2020). Papadimitriou, Mylonas, and Frangakis found that entrepreneurial and artistic orientation, networking, and creative personality significantly impact women's venture performance in the creative industries (2022), suggesting that these characteristics are integral to individuals in the creative sector and can be considered entrepreneurial. These findings underscore the relevance of instilling entrepreneurial attributes, such as creative orientation and networking skills, in creative discipline education to empower individuals with the tools needed for success in the dynamic landscape of creative entrepreneurship.

2.2.6. Creative Discipline Education

Despite rising numbers of young people from non-traditional backgrounds coming through the Higher Education (HE) system, there is a great paradox in the United Kingdom at present in that evidence suggests we are living in an age of declining social mobility (Dorling, 2011). The notion of the ideal creative worker is one of someone willing to do anything for the 'love' of their work, including working for free. Such notions and practices produce an ethic of self-reliance and personal culpability, whereby those who do not or cannot work for free risk being misunderstood as being not committed enough. Consequently, issues of inequality remain 'unspeakable' (Gill, 2010). Whilst more students from non-traditional backgrounds have accessed higher education, inequalities remain at the post-entry stage (Keane, 2011). Scholarship within the sociology of education illustrates how non-traditional students often experience a disjuncture within institutions that privilege middle-class norms, values, dispositions, and ways of being - the habitus (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Reay, Crozier, and Clayton, 2009; Archer, Hutchings, and Ross, 2003; Burke, 2007; Keane, 2011; Taylor, 2007). This correlates with the idea that the most employable student and the ideal future creative worker is a privileged resource-rich middle-class student. HE students' experiences of work placements provide the opportunity to reflect on the presence of inequalities within HE practices – namely, those oriented around preparation for employment – and connections to inequalities within the wider economic landscape. As Skeggs states, the subject of value is,

> …mainly redundant for the working-class who do not have access to the same starting point, the same approach to accrual, access to the knowledge of how to accrue effectively and access to the same sites for optimizing the[ir] cultural capital. (2004:75)

Labour-market intelligence indicates that the creative workforce is characterised by a chronic lack of social, ethnic, and (in some sub-sectors) gender diversity (Creative and Cultural Skills, 2008), suggesting unequal entry into the sector. For example, issues of ethnic, gender, and social underrepresentation have specifically been identified concerning the creative industries (Creative and Cultural Skills, 2008; see also: Allen et al. 2012; Lee 2013; Saha 2013). Issues of underrepresentation can also be considered as a question of 'fitting in' and, for Tomlinson (2007), the subjective dimensions of employability are continually overlooked within employability discourse. Tomlinson's analysis helps to reveal that barriers to creative employment can be explored in terms of attitudes, dispositions, and identities. For example, part of the challenges in gaining access to creative employment may be networking norms, and Allen et al. examine how networking can act as "a mechanism of social closure to the creative sector, favouring those with high levels of social and cultural capital" (2012, p10). The issue of social capital remains once students have completed their degree and are seeking employment, as creative sector employers seem to be more attracted by the creative talent of individuals than their qualifications (Haukka, 2010). Furthermore, creative disciplines are taught mainly in non-Russell Group universities, which may have an impact on the level of renumeration offered (Comunian et al., 2011). Ashton (2010) suggests that 'traditional' degrees, such as art and physics, were preferred by gaming industry employers compared to newer degrees that might be more explicitly industry-focused, such as games design and games programming. This context raises questions for graduates around equality of access and issues of social capital and cultural capital.

A survey undertaken by Creative Media Workforce in 2014 of almost 5,000 responses from people working in the creative industry found that 78% of their respondents were educated to a degree level, compared to 32% in the wider UK working population, and 27% of the respondents held a postgraduate qualification. The survey also found that of those who were educated to a degree level, 51% held a creative/media degree. Only 1% of respondents undertook an apprenticeship (ibid). Given that the respondents' degree levels were more than double the average for the wider UK working population, it could be argued that having a degree is an important route into the creative industries. Rae (ed. Henry, 2007) notes that creative, art, and design courses are vital for the continuing flow of skilled people into the creative industries. There is some support and advocacy from government-funded organisations, including The Higher Education Academy Art Design and Media Centre (ADM-HEA) subject centre and the National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts (NESTA). The government guidance on higher education to deliver enterprise and enterprise education in the creative disciplines has been absorbed into this agenda (Higher Education and National Endowment for Science, 2007) for some time.

Conversations about how practices in art and design schools in HEIs deliver their curricula and assessment of students' work have started to emerge (Carey and Naudin, 2006b; Matlay and Carey, 2007; Penaluna and Penaluna, 2009). If creative discipline students are going to work in their chosen profession, they may at some stage in their career work on a freelance basis. Therefore, they need to have the knowledge and skillset to analyse their market, know how to value their time, how to be commercial, and how to work collaboratively (Brown, ed. Henry, 2007, p. 127). Given that creative discipline graduates are likely to be engaging in a protean career pattern, university curricula should ensure that they are equipped with well-developed creative entrepreneurial skills, as well as highly developed skills associated with arts practice. Bridgstock refers to this as the 'creation or making of work' (2013, p. 124). This view is echoed by Bennet, who suggests that 'the need for [musicians to have] business skills has been recognised internationally' (2007, p. 181).

Carey and Naudin (2006b) argue that enterprise education is already embedded in the curriculum of creative disciplines by identifying the following factors:

- The use of lecturers who are also practitioners and the use of practice educators who can pass on their knowledge of the current industry/enterprise.
- Student coursework is often project-based, time-driven and grounded in real-life projects and briefs, and their work is critiqued by staff and colleagues. This offers relevant experiential learning by mirroring, to some extent, the client/practitioner relationship.
- Arguably, high levels of self-employment in the creative industries are evidence that graduates in this sector have some understanding of self-employment and enterprise through cases and examples.

The use of assessment techniques in the creative disciplines has been described by Penaluna and Penaluna (2009) as an example to business schools on how to assess 'creativity' in an entrepreneurial context. This could be used as a framework to develop pedagogic assessment techniques that assess entrepreneurship. Penaluna and Penaluna make the case that business schools could learn a lot from creative design educators on how to teach and assess enterprise education. Rae (ed. Henry, 2007) suggests that there is a discord between an education system with an emphasis on rational knowing, predicated on the formal identification of goals, targets, standards and skills, and creative education, which encourages experimentation and discovery. The embedment of entrepreneurial skills within creative discipline subjects can be inconsistent and minimal in higher education (2013, p. 123). Given the high prevalence of self-employment within the creative industries, students need to be able to exert an entrepreneurial mindset, have confidence in their own abilities, have knowledge of their sector, and be equipped for research to be able to deliver the services/goods required for their clients (Allen et al., 2013; Carey and Naudin, 2006; Tomás-Miquel et al., 2016). With all these skills and knowledge, it could be argued that creative practitioners exhibit entrepreneurial behaviours and attitudes. This has positive benefits for the students, given the identified links between the level of education and the positive effect on (1) entrepreneurial intention, (2) entrepreneurial professional attraction, and (3) entrepreneurial networking support. A positive link has also been identified between education level and monthly revenue (Christine Winstinindah, Yussi and Syarief, 2018).

Given the apparent increase in the prevalence of self-employment amongst creative industry workers, one can assert the view that creative discipline education needs to be mindful of its duty to ensure that its students graduate with the skill sets and experience required for them to navigate their way into employment, or rather self-employment, within their chosen industry. Daniel and Daniel identified, in their Australian-based study, that graduates reported a need to understand the realities of the workplace and how to survive, let alone thrive, in those industries. Therefore, the authors argued for the need for a focus on business skills and skills that reflect enterprising or entrepreneurial behaviours (2015, p. 422). The development of business skills and enterprise skills should be embedded into creative discipline education, as they are a necessity for a career in the creative industries. As argued by White, it is simply not good enough, for example, to have to advise creative discipline students to enrol on marketing and business entrepreneurial courses offered by the business school (2013). This is further underpinned by government policy and rhetoric around the concepts of the UK being 'knowledge-driven' and the future economic growth and competitiveness of the creative industries within the UK (Evans, 2009).

Whilst there is no requirement to hold a degree in either photography or visual arts to work professionally in the visual arts sector, most photography students do a degree because they want to become a photographer (Newbury, 1997). As discussed in Chapter 1, the career structure of a professional photographer is very different to that of an architect. Lanford estimates that eighty per cent of a photographer's professional effort is spent on business-related matters. The remaining twenty per cent is split between skills and creativity (1979). Given these estimates, the significance of the photographer's business skills is very apparent. Conversely, the client will not pay for the service without the photographer's skill and creativity. Photographers' creativity and the art of photography are often compared to the art of painting. Photography is, therefore, equated with the arts or artistic. Szarkowski points out that photography and art require a mastery of technical skills that need to be applied with aesthetic sensitivity or "pictorial insight" (2009). Returning to the point regarding the photographer’s professional effort being spent on business matters, this is a significant aspect of education. Students need to understand and apply business skills alongside developing their skills and creativity.

The route to becoming a practicing architect includes successful completion of both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees alongside professional exams. Woods (1999), among others, refers to architecture as having been something of a pastime for gentlemen. This hardly holds for modern professional architecture, but the effort needed to qualify is still high compared with the rewards that can be expected at the median level (Wright, 2013). Architecture is one of the UK’s most recognisable professions and sought-after career choices, with an average of 5.6 applications for every university place (RIBA, 2020a). As an example of professional entry, architecture currently sits towards the more conservative end of current practices, with higher level entry requirements, more so than, for instance, allied professions such as engineering, surveying, and landscape architecture (Lester, 2021). Along with medicine, architecture has one of the longest and most expensive training routes of any profession, with seven years as the minimum time from starting a relevant degree to registering as an architect; in practice, the average has been nine and a half years (AERG, 2013). This situation needs to be considered in the context of rising student debt, coupled with employment prospects and incomes that are less certain than those in fields such as medicine. These factors, among others, are beginning to give rise to pressures for greater diversity in the routes that are available to become recognised as an architect (Lester, 2021). The cost of qualifying under the UK’s current fee regime is a factor that potential students consider, and evidence suggests that this has the potential to favour students from wealthier socio-economic groups (Farrell, 2014; Jessell, 2018). Higher education can effectively leverage practices such as interprofessional courses, work-based programs, and recognition of existing learning and levels of ability (Lester, 2021). Simultaneously, from a professional and regulatory perspective, there is a compelling need and available means to endorse a broader spectrum of routes through which practitioners can acquire architectural skills and expertise. Integrating entrepreneurial aspects into these educational avenues further enriches the skill set of aspiring architects, preparing them for the multifaceted challenges of the architecture profession.

2.3. Entrepreneurship

The concept of entrepreneurship is closely linked to the activities required to be an entrepreneur. Scarborough and Cornwall suggested that a knowledge-based economy, such as the UK, provides advantages to small businesses due to the costs of managing and transmitting knowledge and innovation being very low (2018). The UK is also perceived to be an entrepreneurship-friendly nation, ranked fourth in The Global Entrepreneurship Index ranking (2018). The Global Entrepreneurship and Development Institute (GEDI) collects data on the entrepreneurial attitudes, abilities and aspirations of the local population and then weights these against the prevailing social and economic 'infrastructure', including aspects such as broadband connectivity and transport links to external markets. This process creates fourteen 'pillars' that GEDI uses to measure the health of the regional ecosystem. It has been suggested that the UK is an exemplar of an international trend towards an 'entrepreneurial economy' (Gilbert, Audretsch and McDougall, 2004, p. 313). At least in theory, it should be easy for entrepreneurs to set up their businesses, especially when one takes into consideration that globally, nearly one in eight people are actively engaged in launching a business (Scarborough and Cornwall, 2018). With the combination of the right conditions in the UK and the amount of activity taking place, being an entrepreneur is very attractive. Not only is it the combination of conditions and activity that make entrepreneurship very attractive, but as Kurato (2016:33), suggests, "Entrepreneurship is the new revolution, and it's about continual innovation and creativity." Kurato's words illustrate the relationship between entrepreneurship, innovation, and creativity, suggesting that entrepreneurs are both innovative and creative. Innovation and creativity alone will not make a financially sustainable business venture. One definition of entrepreneurship is that it is the process of identifying opportunities, being able to marshal the resources required, taking advantage of those opportunities, and, finally, creating a new venture by providing needed products or services to the customer to achieve a profit (Hill, 2012). This definition has the achievement of profit as the main motivator or desired outcome.

According to Rae, entrepreneurship is more about the concept in that it encompasses both the practical and academic knowledge, techniques, or skills used in being an *entrepreneur* (2007). Rae defines an entrepreneur as a person who acts in an enterprising way by identifying, acting, or creating a new enterprise (p2). Similarly, Barringer and Ireland (2018) discuss the term entrepreneurial as a major four-step process, which the aspiring entrepreneur needs to execute and successfully launch their venture. Mariotti and Glackin (2015) discuss entrepreneurship as the act of creating a new venture undertaken by entrepreneurs. These definitions emphasise the drive for creating the new enterprise as the main motivator or desired outcome. In this definition, entrepreneurs are people who recognise and act on opportunities other people may not have noticed (p28). Mariotto and Glackin discuss entrepreneurs who create new ideas and exploit new technological concepts, such as Apple devices and Skullcandy headphones (p.27), suggesting a combination of drivers in creating a new venture and innovation. Cantillion, cited in Juergen, M., *(*2012:30*)* *Entrepreneur*, *40*(3), gives the following definition of an entrepreneur:

> An entrepreneur is one who creates a new business in the face of risk and uncertainty for the purpose of achieving profit and growth by identifying significant opportunities and assembling the necessary resources to capitalise on them.

This definition moves away from the activities and drivers/motivations of entrepreneurs to also include personality and behavioural traits. It suggests that the definition of entrepreneurship describes the process *and behaviours and personality traits* of entrepreneurs in setting up a new venture. The term entrepreneur is used to describe someone who seeks out new opportunities, usually not spotted by others, or who seeks new opportunities from technological developments or gaps in the market (Hill, 2012). The entrepreneur exploits these opportunities for profit by marshalling the resources required to provide the service or product. The new venture has one purpose, which is to generate profit. In undertaking the set-up of a new venture, the entrepreneur faces risk and uncertainty in the quest for profit (Mariotti and Glackin, 2015).

Not all entrepreneurs are solely motivated by profit; there are often other drivers behind an individual's quest for setting up new ventures with the aim of providing a new product or service to the market. The quest for economic value or profit, whilst a necessity for a viable business venture, is not the only factor for some entrepreneurs. For some entrepreneurs, the quest is not exclusively about the economic value (profit), but instead, they are also seeking to create social or cultural value (Cnossen, Loots and Witteloostuijn, 2019). Some entrepreneurs are driven by wider considerations - for example, the triple bottom line of people, planet, and profit (Elkington, 1997). The term "social entrepreneur" is used for individuals who typically attempt to further broaden social, cultural, and environmental goals. The term is often associated with the voluntary sector, for example, health and poverty alleviation (Thompson, 2002).

2.3.1. Government policies and agenda

Given the significant detrimental impact Covid-19 has made on many businesses in the UK and globally, the UK government has set out a policy paper, *Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth* (3 March 2021), which details the government's plans for generating economic growth. The policy document discusses tackling 'geographical disparities', which politicians often refer to as 'levelling up'. This is an attempt to address the unequal spread of economic activity and growth considering the high concentration of investments in London and the South East discussed earlier. Relatedly, the policy document also acknowledges that women and entrepreneurs from BAME backgrounds are disproportionately struggling to access the finance they need to start and grow their businesses. Whilst it may be helpful to have this disparity acknowledged, it was not clear in the document what actions would be taken to address and rebalance it. The creative industries were acknowledged to be a UK strength and a major success story. The funding targeting the creative industries seemed concentrated on the digital economy, with initiatives such as the National Data Strategy and the Digital Strategy. There was only limited reference to other sectors in the creative industries and how these would be supported. In terms of support to businesses, the initiatives have a strong focus on venture capital with the Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme

(SEIS), the Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS), and Venture Capital Trusts (VCTs) established to support SMEs' access to growth finance. The initiatives appear to steer towards capital investments and supporting start-ups. There appeared to be very limited reference to 'soft' business support initiatives, such as advice, guidance on best practices, and access to services to enable businesses to address challenges. There was limited advice to support new business ventures whose background and experience may be more partial when it comes to running their own business (Wren et al*.*, 2002). Given the lack of targeted resources and support for the creative industries, it was problematic to see how these initiatives would benefit creative entrepreneurs, such as those who took part in this study, in developing and growing their businesses. The economic policies have two strands; firstly, there are those that are focused upon entrepreneurship policy which targets the key actors (the entrepreneurs), and secondly, there are those that are targeting SME policy which seeks to improve business competitiveness (Rigby and Ramlogan, January 2013). It appears that the *Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth* policy is more focused on targeting SME policy as opposed to entrepreneurial policy. Whilst this may be effective at stimulating economic generation and regeneration for many of the multi-national companies, it may neither be designed for, nor effective at, economic generation and regeneration for individual entrepreneurs. Given the references in the political rhetoric from all political parties towards their commitment to enterprise and entrepreneurs, it is difficult to argue the case that the commitment is not there. Indeed, there is a political consensus in the UK that businesses are of central importance to the health of the economy (Mallett and Wapshott, 2020).

2.3.2. Entrepreneurial education

The role of higher education as the potential driver of economic growth through providing entrepreneurship education has been served by several policy initiatives. These include The National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (Dearing, 1997), which recommended that universities consider the scope for encouraging entrepreneurship through innovative approaches to programme design. Subsequently, Universities UK cited business and entrepreneurial development as one of four strategic goals for UK Universities (2000). The Higher Education

Innovation Fund (HEIF) introduced significant funding streams with the strategic aim of adding value to society and the economy via the transfer of knowledge (1999). This initiative provided HEIs with an opportunity to contribute to the development of entrepreneurial and enterprising staff, students, and graduates (Davies, Hides and Powell, 2002). The significance of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education is discussed in various policy reports and reviews such as those published by BIS (2010), BERR (2008), and the European Commission (2006; 2008; 2012). UK Government-commissioned reports and reviews explicitly referencing and promoting the significance of entrepreneurship education or support for graduate start-up businesses include the reviews of Wilson (2012), Witty (2013), and Dowling (2015) of University 2 Business collaborations and the role of HEIs in economic growth, the APPG Microbusiness (2014) report '*An Education System Fit for an Entrepreneur*', Lord Young's (2014) '*Enterprise for All*', the QAA '*Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education: Guidance for UK Higher Education Providers'* (2018), and the APPG report (2018) on Enterprise Education. The UK government and other public bodies provide guidance and clarity on both the significance and ethos of enterprise and entrepreneurship (QAA, 2018). Both these definitions are applied in this study. This definition notes that enterprise is the application of behaviours of *"…creativity, originality, initiative, idea generation, design thinking, adaptability and reflexivity…"(p7)*. The definition given for entrepreneurship education is therefore: *"… the application of enterprise behaviours, attributes, and competencies into the creation of cultural, social, or economic value"* (QAA January 2018, *Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education: Guidance for UK Higher Education Providers* p7).

Higher education institutions play a significant role in promoting both the concept of and the skills and knowledge required for entrepreneurs (Hahn et al., 2020). There seems to be a lack of consensus between scholars as to whether there is a positive or negative relationship between education and the development of personal attributes and perceived skills related to entrepreneurship (Varamäki et al., 2015). Indeed, there seems to be a demand from students who arrive at university keen to develop their entrepreneurial skills and knowledge alongside their entrepreneurial aspirations. According to Collins et al., not all these needs are being effectively met by all HEIs (Collins, Hannon and Smith, 2004). There are high expectations from a diverse group of constituents, including students, as to the delivery of entrepreneurial education, especially from Entrepreneurial Centres, which is not always backed up by the appropriate level of resources (Finkle et al., 2013). According to Hoppe et al., it appears there is a didactical divide between entrepreneurial education for business and an entrepreneurial approach to teaching and learning. They suggest that educators need to organise their curricula in terms of the specific context in addition to the presented models (Hoppe, Westerberg and Leffler, 2017; Carey and Matlay, 2011). On the one hand, there is entrepreneurial education with a focus on developing personal attributes that can be applied to a range of different contexts. On the other hand, there is entrepreneurial education with a complete focus on starting and running a business. Most HEIs seem to focus on the latter approach (Jones and Iredale, 2010). Most course content of entrepreneurship education is staged, commencing with the entrepreneurial intention-building stage, followed by the enterprise-setting stage (Srivastava, Satsangi and Satsangee, 2019). Therefore, most entrepreneurial activity undertaken in HEI Enterprise Centres is planned to support students by enabling and supporting business start-ups (Jones et al., 2021). Given that the majority of HEIs' focus is on equipping students with the skills and knowledge to set up and run a business, a common form of pedagogic approach in entrepreneurship education syllabus is for students to create and write a business plan (Hoppe, Westerberg and Leffler, 2017). There is evidence to suggest that the process of creating a business plan results in entrepreneurial competence being highly rated and that whether the business plan is real or fictitious does not affect the level of entrepreneurial competence (Ferreras-Garcia, Hernández-Lara and Serradell-López, 2019).

There has, in HEIs and in all disciplines, been a move away from traditional lecturer-led passive learning techniques for some time now (Gibb, 2002; Jones and English, 2004). Educators can facilitate learning by linking to real-life entrepreneurial situations to support student learning and the development of new skills as an entrepreneur (Macht and Ball, 2016). Following on, Jones and Iredale (2010) state that entrepreneurship education requires experiential learning styles, creative problem-solving solving and learning by doing, to engage learners. Bell and Bell (2020) argue that educators need to understand the 'why' in the process and that only by underpinning their educational practice with educational theory can educators truly maximise their educational effectiveness. Thorp and Goldstein (2010) argue that entrepreneurship within HEIs takes a narrow perspective on the commercialisation of ideas or business start-ups and should adopt a broader perspective promoting entrepreneurship. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to encourage all university students to have an 'entrepreneurial mindset' (Jones et al., 2021) across a wider range of disciplines beyond business studies, which develop enterprising behaviour and skills to future-proof them in a dynamic and ever-changing labour market. In terms of context, it is still the case that most HEI entrepreneurial education takes place within business schools or enterprise centres affiliated with business schools. Evidence from Boldureanu et al.'s study suggests that entrepreneurship education based on successful entrepreneurial role models may positively shape the entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions of students. This could lead to a higher orientation of student perception towards the social benefits of entrepreneurship (new jobs) compared to financial ones (high income) (2020). Some literature has highlighted that the experiential pedagogic approach within creative disciplines is arguably providing entrepreneurial education; e.g., live briefs, applied, and experiential approaches (Carey and Naudin (2006), Carey and Matlay (2010), Penaluna and Penaluna (2009), which, given the high levels of self-employment in A&D, may have something to teach business schools.

Higher education contributes to the development of human capital (Becker, 1962), as the opportunity to study beyond the mandatory education level provides students with a set of opportunities and resources unavailable to those less qualified (Rosa, 2003). People with high human capital are more likely to identify entrepreneurial opportunities (Ucbasaran, Westhead, and Wright, 2008), exploit those opportunities (Shane, 2003), and have better performance in their new ventures (Unger et al., 2011). Entrepreneurship research tends to support the existence of a positive relationship between human capital and entrepreneurial activity (Davidsson and Honig, 2003). People with high human capital are equipped with the information and analytical skills that improve entrepreneurial judgment and understanding of the entrepreneurial process (Shane, 2003). The relationship between human capital and entrepreneurial activity is significant to this study, as it brings into question whether people who have lower human capital are less likely to be able to exhibit entrepreneurial activity. It also brings into question whether the significance of human capital forms an unhidden barrier to entry into a successful career in the creative industries.

2.3.3. Entrepreneurial identity and entrepreneurial motivations

The historical perspective of entrepreneurial identity is expressed as being one of heroic figures driven by a quest for economic prosperity (Nicholson and Anderson, 2005; Ogbor, 2000). As discussed previously, the formation and drivers for entrepreneurship are more wide-ranging and complex than exclusively making money. A study by Clarke and Holt (2017) asked a sample of twenty entrepreneurs to come up with metaphors to express their entrepreneurial identity. The findings suggested that their entrepreneurial identities were neither singular nor fixed, and the images and accompanying verbal descriptions evoked many competing, even paradoxical, identities. Indeed, given that the drivers behind wanting to be an entrepreneur are multiple and complex, it is hardly surprising that entrepreneurial identity is multiple and complex as well. Perhaps the only universal suggestion that can be made about entrepreneurs is that an individual's entrepreneurial identity can be a determinant of their entrepreneurial intentions (Vesalainen and Pihkala, 2000). Thus, an entrepreneurial identity may be expressed when they "see and talk of themselves as entrepreneurs" (Down and Reveley, 2004, p. 234). An individual's entrepreneurial identity is not formed in isolation. The multiple nature of identity lends itself to the recognition that entrepreneurial identity is formed concerning significant others (Warren, 2004). Concepts of ethnic identities and entrepreneurial identities intersect (Barrett and Vershinina, 2017). Entrepreneurial identity is also shaped by the industry environment the individual is operating, or seeking to operate, within (Yitshaki and Kropp, 2016). Entrepreneurial identity is shaped by both individuals' networks and the industry environment. In essence, both personal support and networks and the context in which one is operating are significant to shaping entrepreneurial identity.

For many entrepreneurs, the opportunity to shape the values and ethics of how they will run their business is a major motivational factor in setting up their venture (Scarborough and Cornwall, 2018). Non-pecuniary motivations are more important than monetary motivations for people to start a new business. Social entrepreneurs' motivations can also be linked to a desire for social change in the form of a drive for wider cultural and social or environmental benefits resulting from the outcomes of a venture (Rey-Martí, Ribeiro-Soriano and Palacios-Marqués, 2016). Social entrepreneurs apply their business knowledge and entrepreneurial approach to address critical dilemmas facing society, such as economic, social, and environmental problems (Germak and Singh, 2010). Incorporating a gender perspective into these endeavours ensures a comprehensive understanding and consideration of the unique challenges and opportunities faced by diverse individuals and communities in addressing these critical dilemmas.

2.4. A gender perspective

Understanding the role of gender theory is paramount when examining creative industries, as it provides a nuanced perspective that goes beyond a binary view of biological sex. The concept of gender acknowledges the social roles and constructs attributed to masculinity and femininity. In exploring the influence of context within higher education and the specific cultures of the architecture and photography fields, gender theory takes a critical stance, emphasizing the significance of context, social relations, and culture (Henry et al., 2016).

Social Constructionism, a crucial theoretical framework in sociological and cultural studies, serves as a lens to comprehend the collaborative formation and shared development of societal understandings. By challenging the conventional notion that knowledge, significance, and meaning are individual constructs, Social Constructionism asserts that these facets emerge through dynamic interactions and negotiations within a social context (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). In this light, individuals actively engage in a collective process of constructing a mental model of the social world, shaping shared realities through ongoing exchanges of ideas, beliefs, and cultural norms within their community. Language, as the primary medium for communication, negotiation, and the shaping of shared realities, plays a central role (Gergen, 2009).

Furthermore, Social Constructionism extends its influence beyond individual interactions to encompass broader social structures and institutions. This theory acknowledges that societal norms, values, and institutions are not inherently fixed or universally predetermined but rather evolve as products of ongoing social processes (Burr, 2003). In organisational contexts, Social Constructionism becomes particularly relevant, as it highlights the existence of unique organisational cultures. Shaped by collective beliefs, practices, and communication patterns, these cultures provide the overarching context within which individuals work or study (Trice and Beyer, 1993). Thus, Social Constructionism offers a comprehensive and nuanced perspective on the intricate ways in which human beings collaboratively create and navigate the complex tapestry of their social reality.

In the context of gender, Social Constructionism plays a significant role, challenging the notion that gender identity and roles are biologically determined or fixed. Instead, it emphasises that they are socially constructed through cultural, historical, and interpersonal processes (Butler, 1990; West and Zimmerman, 1987). Social Constructionism posits that being masculine or feminine is not an inherent quality but a product of societal norms, expectations, and power dynamics (Connell, 1987). Gender roles are seen as created and reinforced through social interactions, language, and cultural practices, rather than being universal or static (Lorber, 1994). This perspective recognizes the variability of gender norms across cultures and their evolution over time (Kessler and McKenna, 1978).

Moreover, Social Constructionism illuminates how institutions, media, and language contribute to the construction of gender norms (Butler, 1993). It underscores the role of discourse in shaping and reinforcing gender identities, influencing individuals' perceptions of themselves and others. Media representations, cultural narratives, and institutional practices all play a role in perpetuating or challenging traditional gender norms (Goffman, 1979).

In examining gender through a Social Constructionist lens, the focus shifts from viewing gender as a fixed and natural attribute to understanding it as a dynamic and socially negotiated concept (Acker, 1990). This perspective underscores the idea that gender identity is not predetermined but rather emerges through ongoing social interactions, cultural influences, and institutional practices. Acker's work emphasises the fluidity inherent in gender constructions, challenging the traditional notion that gender roles are static and universally defined. This approach opens avenues for exploring the intricate and multifaceted nature of gender identities. It acknowledges that individuals actively participate in the construction of their gender identity within the broader social context, engaging in a continuous negotiation of societal expectations and personal experiences. By recognizing the socially constructed nature of gender, researchers and advocates gain valuable insights into how cultural norms shape individuals' perceptions of themselves and others. Moreover, adopting a Social Constructionist perspective on gender invites a critical examination of the impact of social expectations on individuals. Connell (2002) argues that prevailing gender norms, often deeply embedded in societal structures, influence various aspects of individuals' lives, including their roles in family, work, and community. This perspective prompts a nuanced exploration of the power dynamics at play in shaping and reinforcing these norms, shedding light on how they contribute to inequality and limit opportunities for certain individuals.

Importantly, the Social Constructionist lens suggests the potential for challenging and reshaping prevailing gender norms for a more inclusive and equitable society (Connell, 2002). By understanding gender as a socially negotiated concept, there is room for intervention and advocacy to break down restrictive stereotypes, promote diversity, and create environments that allow for the authentic expression of gender identity. This approach aligns with efforts to foster a more just and equitable society that recognises and respects the diversity of gender experiences and expressions.

2.4.1. Intersectionality

The term 'intersectionality' was first coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in her influential 1989 paper, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex" (Crenshaw, 1989). Originating from the critical race theory discourse, which seeks to scrutinize the interplay of race, society, and law to challenge prevailing approaches to racial justice, the intersectional theory holds significant relevance in the dynamic landscape of the creative industries.

In the realm of creative endeavours, where diversity and complexity are inherent, intersectionality emerges as a powerful lens for understanding the nuanced challenges and opportunities faced by individuals. This theory challenges the conventional practice of analysing issues in isolation and emphasizes the interconnected nature of various power structures within the creative landscape, including laws, policies, governments, religious institutions, and media (Hankivsky, 2014). Through these structures, individuals within the creative industries may experience both privilege and oppression in nuanced ways, with the latter including racism, homophobia, transphobia, sexism, and ableism (Hankivsky, 2014).

The creative industries, as hubs of innovation and expression, thrive on diversity, making an intersectional perspective crucial. This perspective rejects the notion of monism, advocating for a holistic understanding of the complex interactions shaping both individuals and the broader creative ecosystem (Cho et al., 2013).

In the context of creative pursuits, where individuals navigate complex networks and diverse roles, an intersectional approach becomes particularly essential. It challenges traditional analyses and underscores the interconnected nature of various social categories, including race, gender, social class, sexuality, ability, and age (Cho et al., 2013). This perspective enriches our understanding of social inequality and offers nuanced insights into the experiences of those engaged in creative work.

Examining entrepreneurship within the creative industries through an intersectional lens unveils a nuanced portrayal of individuals' experiences, recognizing the intricacy of their identities and the systemic challenges faced by marginalized communities. This perspective extends to the additional discriminations and stigmatizations experienced by women and ethnic minorities, impacting their self-esteem and confidence, thereby intensifying the hurdles in pursuing entrepreneurship (Heilman and Chen, 2003).

Furthermore, entrepreneurship, often perceived as a progressive avenue for self-empowerment and wealth creation, might, for individuals on the margins of society, function more as a coping mechanism in the face of systemic disadvantages (Bruton et al., 2013). An illustration of this complex interplay is evident in a study examining unemployed women in social housing, revealing how multiple disadvantages shape women's entrepreneurial intentions within the creative realm (Hussain, Vershinina, and Carey, 2023).

This intersectional perspective emphasises that individual experiences are not shaped by a singular factor but rather by the dynamic interplay of multiple social structures and systems of oppression. To comprehend an individual's experience of gender, for instance, one must consider the intersection and impact of factors such as race, socioeconomic status, and sexuality (Cho et al., 2013). This comprehensive understanding is vital for developing inclusive policies and practices within the creative industries, addressing the complex ways in which social categories intersect and influence entrepreneurial journeys.

Intersectionality also highlights the importance of considering power dynamics and social hierarchies in the analysis of various identities. The concept emphasizes that individuals may experience privilege and oppression simultaneously, depending on the intersections of their identities (Collins, 1990). For instance, a black woman may face unique challenges that differ from those experienced by a white woman or a black man.

Moreover, intersectionality recognises the existence of microaggressions and systemic biases that can disproportionately affect individuals with intersecting marginalized identities (Crenshaw, 1989). Discrimination is not additive but interactive, and the experiences of individuals are shaped by the convergence of multiple social categories.

In the context of creative industries or higher education within creative disciplines, an intersectional approach is crucial for understanding the unique challenges and opportunities faced by individuals with diverse and intersecting identities. Policies and practices that fail to consider intersectionality may inadvertently perpetuate inequalities and contribute to the marginalization of certain groups (Hill Collins, 2000). In essence, intersectionality serves as a critical framework for examining the interconnected nature of various social categories within the vibrant and diverse landscape of the creative industries. By understanding and addressing the complex ways in which multiple dimensions of identity simultaneously influence individuals' experiences, policies and practices can be tailored to foster inclusivity, promote diversity, and contribute to a more equitable and empowering creative ecosystem.

2.4.2. Female entrepreneurship

Applying a Social Constructionist perspective to the study of female entrepreneurship offers a valuable lens through which to understand the multifaceted nature of women's entrepreneurial experiences. Social Constructionism, as a theoretical framework, emphasises that various aspects of our reality, including gender roles and identities, are socially constructed through shared meanings, interactions, and cultural norms (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Gergen, 2009).

- **Gender as a Socially Constructed Concept:** Social Constructionism challenges the essentialist view of gender, which assumes that gender differences are biologically determined. Instead, it posits that gender is a dynamic and socially negotiated concept. In the context of female entrepreneurship, this perspective suggests that societal expectations and cultural norms influence the way entrepreneurship is perceived and enacted by women (West and Zimmerman, 1987).
- **Fluidity and Diversity in Female Entrepreneurial Identities:** Social Constructionism allows for an exploration of the fluid and diverse nature of female entrepreneurial identities. It acknowledges that women's experiences in entrepreneurship are shaped by complex interactions between individual agency and societal expectations. Female entrepreneurs may navigate and negotiate diverse identities influenced by factors such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and cultural contexts (Acker, 1990).
- **Impact of Social Expectations on Entrepreneurial Roles:** Examining female entrepreneurship through a Social Constructionist lens involves analysing how social expectations and norms influence the roles and behaviours expected of women in entrepreneurial contexts. This includes scrutinising how cultural stereotypes and gendered expectations may shape perceptions of competence, leadership style, and the types of businesses women are encouraged or discouraged from pursuing (Connell, 2002).
- **Intersectionality and Female Entrepreneurship:** Social Constructionism encourages an intersectional analysis, recognising that gender intersects with other social categories. Understanding the experiences of female entrepreneurs requires considering the intersections of gender with race, class, sexuality, and other factors. This approach acknowledges that women's entrepreneurial experiences are not homogenous but shaped by the interplay of multiple social identities (Crenshaw, 1989).

- **Challenging and Reshaping Gender Norms in Entrepreneurship:** Social Constructionism opens avenues for challenging and reshaping gender norms within the entrepreneurial landscape. By recognizing that gender roles are socially constructed, researchers and advocates can contribute to dismantling stereotypes and fostering environments that empower women entrepreneurs. This includes promoting policies and initiatives that address gender biases and encourage diverse participation in entrepreneurship (Welter and Smallbone, 2008).

The application of Social Constructionism as discussed above highlights a dominant paradigm where men, particularly white Western men, take centre stage as the archetypal subjects of entrepreneurial investigation, elevating specific gender and racial identities while escaping critical scrutiny (Ogbor, 2000). Despite the pivotal role of entrepreneurship in propelling economic growth and sustainability, the historical portrayal of an entrepreneur predominantly mirrored a 'businessman' (Taylor, 2011). This representation entrenched a gendered narrative that marginalized women within the entrepreneurial discourse, relegating them to the status of the 'other.' In this milieu, the archetype of an entrepreneur, shaped by hegemonic ideals of masculinity, became the normative standard. Consequently, female entrepreneurs may not always recognize the (re)constructed social norms governing interactions and determining who is deemed worthy of engagement in specific entrepreneurial situations, perpetuating asymmetric social relations and power differentials (Jones and Clifton, 2018).

This raises questions about how many women acquiesce to the status quo, tacitly endorsing and perpetuating structural inequalities through downplaying and silencing (Lewis et al., 2017, p. 219). The normalization of these power imbalances, both in everyday social interactions and on a broader societal scale, renders them invisible and taken for granted (Fairclough, 1989, p. 2). It is only when the extent of sexism is exposed, labelled, and addressed that entrepreneurship can genuinely become a catalyst for social change (Calás, Smircich, and Bourne, 2009).

West and Zimmerman (1987) assert that gender is not merely an inherent aspect of one's identity, but rather a dynamic and recurrent performative act shaped through interactions with others (p. 17). This interaction gives rise to a complex social construct - gender identity - a framework through which individuals recognize themselves and others. This concept aligns with the notion that gender is something individuals actively 'do,' encompassing a spectrum of behaviours and assumptions (Butler, 1993, 2004; West and Zimmerman, 1987).

The structural dimensions of gender manifest as socially constructed ascriptions, contributing to the generation of individual and group identification practices and performances. These include conventional categories like femininity and masculinity, as well as a spectrum of diverse gender identities within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) and queer communities. Notably, this spectrum encompasses identities such as androgenicity, highlighting the multifaceted nature of gender construction (Risman, 2004). In essence, the historical underpinnings of entrepreneurship research reflect a gendered lens that has shaped the narrative around entrepreneurship, often excluding or marginalizing certain identities. Recognising the performative nature of gender and understanding it as a socially constructed identity allows for a more inclusive and nuanced exploration of entrepreneurial experiences across diverse gender spectra.

Previous discussions around gender and entrepreneurship locate women as a universal group with little regard to the fact that women are a heterogeneous group and, as such, acknowledge that ethnicity, class, culture, age, location, and educational experience will all influence women’s experiences of business ownership (Marlow and Swail, 2014). This gender-biased and gender-blind view influenced academic research, policy, and practice until around the 1990s, when a growing body of work recognised that gender is a critical factor in our understanding of what shapes successful entrepreneurs and what influencing factors shape their entrepreneurial outcomes (McAdam, 2013). Traditional discourse on women’s entrepreneurship typically compares with male entrepreneurship, outlining the numerous ways in which women entrepreneurs are disadvantaged. As such, the entrepreneurial activities women perform are more likely to be deemed less effective and of lower value merely because they are undertaken by women (Ahl and Marlow, 2012), despite evidence of marginal differences in the entrepreneurial effectiveness of men and women business owners (Robb and Watson, 2012). As Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) note, 'gender is always relational, and patterns of masculinity are socially defined in contradistinction from some model [whether real or imaginary] of femininity' (p. 848). The influence of other critical social characteristics is ignored (e.g. class, race/ethnicity, and age), and how they intersect with gender only provides a partial explanation for social positionality and its effects (Anthias, 2001; Essers and Benschop, 2009). Discussions about male entrepreneurship are often 'genderless', as they are perceived to be the normative subject within entrepreneurial discourse, thereby affording privilege and visibility to the notion that men are the exemplary entrepreneurial subjects (Ahl and Marlow, 2012, 2019). This debate reinforces the discourse that gender has a role to play in entrepreneurship and simplistic notions of binary male and female comparators often with females perceived to be at a disadvantage. This discourse is buoyed by patriarchal power relations, which provide privilege to men through the ascription of masculinity, articulated through roles such as fathers or heads of families and households (Hamilton, 2006, 2013). Discounting women, and the issues related to them, ensures that alleged 'mainstream' debates regarding what is perceived as 'core' entrepreneurial activities and processes (opportunity recognition, start-up, effectuation, growth, and exit processes) are positioned as gender neutral, whereas, it could be suggested, they are gender blind (Martin and Phillips, 2017).

This in turn extends to the realm of work, employment, and self-employment. Within this debate of male privilege are implicit assumptions of heteronormativity (Marlow et al., 2017). This is not the full picture, as the discourse on how "woman" and "female" are perceived has failed to acknowledge that entrepreneurship is quite common for women (Kelley et al., 2012) and is thus a vital part of women's working lives. According to the GEM 2021/22 report, the gender ratio (female–male) for Total early-stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) rates in the United Kingdom are 11.0 (Women TEA %) and 14.2 (Men TEA %) with a W/M ratio of 0.77 (GEM Report 2021/22). Globally, women are creating jobs for themselves and others, and a good number are planning for growth.

The attractive features of self-employment enable women to overcome dissatisfaction with paid employment opportunities, due both to male prejudice within the relevant employment sector and to the need to balance hours of employment with running a household and looking after children (Goffee and Scase, 2015). A desire for flexibility, job satisfaction, and quality of life have all been identified as significant in the entrepreneurial decisions made by women (Shabbir and Di Gregorio, 1996). This desire for entrepreneurship as a solution for those who feel pushed out of corporate employment due to frustration, discontentment, and discrimination (Heilman and Chen, 2003) can create a range of different issues. Women often feel they work longer hours, lack employment protection such as holiday pay and pension contributions, and have less recognition by family members and society than they previously did when they were in paid employment (Duberley and Carrigan, 2013). Despite the many challenges, the lure of business ownership remains, for many women, underpinned by the desire for autonomy, such as control of their own time and being able to set their priorities and influence their destiny (Heilman and Chen, 2003). In addition to being able to work autonomously and independently by setting up their business venture, it is often the desire to combine caring responsibilities, usually motherhood, and maintain a professional profile combined with generating income, which is the main driver for women seeking entrepreneurship by choosing to set-up and run their business from home (Duberley and Carrigan, 2013).

Life stage events, such as motherhood, can have a profound influence on perceptions and enactment of careers and career transitions (Lewis et al., 2015). This enactment of career transitions is often driven by women who wish to escape discrimination and the ‘glass ceiling’ effects of the corporate world and find a balance between work and family responsibilities, which is a key driver for entrepreneurship. According to Ahl, available data indicates that half of self-employed women work part-time (less than 30 hours per week) and around a third base their business within the home (2004). The term ‘mumpreneurs’ has been much bandied about by social media and discussed by researchers such as Duberley and Carrigan (2013), who discuss women’s experiences of combining enterprise and motherhood. Paradoxically, the experiences of men combining enterprise and fatherhood do not appear to have the default term of ‘dadpreneurs’ used to explain their career identities, thus embedding further the need to understand the gendered discourse of entrepreneurship. Home-based working is also a contributory factor, felt by many working women, towards the unequal division of domestic duties, with women often undertaking a higher proportion of the housework than their male counterparts. Gendered power relations and inequalities within the household remain largely invisible. Studies (Hochschild, 1990; Baxter, 1997; Baxter, 2000) indicate that women often do a ‘double shift’ by continuing to assume responsibility for the bulk of the household chores as well as participating in paid employment or self-employment. There is evidence to suggest that women exhibit preferences towards flexible working hours and part-time involvement in self-employment, thereby decreasing the scope of work experience and exposure to business opportunities, which decreases entrepreneurial start-up rates (Marlow et al., 2012; Carter et al., 2015). This all contributes to limiting the time women spend nurturing and expanding their own businesses.

Whilst women’s status and educational and economic opportunities have considerably improved over the centuries, certainly in Western societies, women are still at a socio-economic disadvantage. Despite improvements in women’s educational levels and attainments and legal and societal changes - for example, the Equal Pay Act - there still exists a gender pay gap. Whilst there have been efforts to reduce the gender pay gap in recent years, according to ONS data (2020), with architects, for example, women earn 15.3% less than men, with women holding 29% of these jobs. Again, according to ONS data (2020), female photographers earn 13.1% less than their male counterparts. There were no employment split figures available for photographers. These figures do not include the vast number of photographers and architects who are freelance, so the actual gender gap difference between women and men's average earners may be lesser or greater. Some of this divergence, particularly for women with family responsibilities, can be accounted for by women working fewer hours in the labour market and their greater engagement with part-time work (Carter and Shaw, 2006). For women who wish to become business owners, this pay gap is continued when seeking finance to set up their business ventures. There is some indication (Bhide, 2000; Carter, 2000 ; Marlow and Patton, 2005) that female business owners experience additional disadvantages because of their gender. Some of this experience may be down to perceptions about women’s risk tolerance and risk aversion, this perception is based on both historical and contemporary socio-economic factors that have influenced interpretations of women's approaches to risk and finance (Marlow and Swail, 2014). Due to industrial choice being determined by gendered expectations, women tend to set up business ventures in sectors where there are low start-up costs but in highly competitive markets (Ahl, 2004).

2.4.3. Women working in the creative industries.

The Fawcett Society's annual *Sex and Power* 2020 audit report stated that there is low representation of women across all sections of culture and media, including only 16% women British film directors. Women also make up only 21% of national newspaper editors, with just four women in top jobs. The only senior roles where women outnumber men are in women's and lifestyle magazines (Kaur, January 2020). According to Ofcom’s 2018 *Diversity in TV* report, 46% of employees are women, but they only hold 41% of senior management positions (Ofcom, 27 September 2018). In common with other industries, women are underrepresented in senior leadership positions across most, if not all, sectors of the creative industries (Conor, Gill and Taylor, 2015; Dodd, 2012; Henry, 2009; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2015). This phenomenon is yet to be fully understood but it would appear from the literature to be a complex combination of cultural and societal perceptions and expectations of the roles of men and women in our society, combined with gendered hierarchy and unconscious bias in the workplace and gaining access to work (paid or otherwise).

The creative industries are notorious for having a long-hours culture, for little or often no pay, which is exploited by a ‘you’re doing what you love’ attitude, as well as precarious and ‘bulimic’ working patterns (Pratt and Jeffcutt, 2009). This culture is underpinned by scant regard for basic working conditions (Connor et al., 2015). Whilst it is correct to say that this environment and culture applies equally to both men and women, it has been suggested that women are more disadvantaged than men in their vertical career progression (Dodd, 2012). The elucidations for low ratios of women compared to men in senior leadership roles fall into two areas: firstly, the work environment and workplace itself with the practices and inequality regimes contained within and secondly, the broader societal and cultural factors which create inequality and maintain a gendered hierarchy. There is a blurring of the boundaries between all these complex factors, and all are integral to each other.

Studies that have investigated the gender makeup of the workforce in creative industries have focused on those creative industries where there is a higher number of workers (whether employed or freelance) employed on a project. Examples include studies based on film, television, and digital industries (Bielby, 2009; Blair, 2001; French, 2014; Jones and Pringle, 2015; Wing-Fai, Gill and Randle, 2015; Wreyford, 2015). There appears to be a gendered division in the types of roles undertaken by women. Horizontal and vertical segregation by gender is striking, as women and men appear to be channelled into different roles with subsequent differing levels of remuneration, opportunities, and influence. For example, women dominate in wardrobe, hairdressing, and make-up roles in film and television but are dramatically under-represented in sound and lighting departments, as well as key creative roles such as screenwriter, cinematographer, and director (Skillset, 2012). This lack of women in leadership and decision-making roles is not the only indicator of patriarchal domination within the creative industries. When there is a downturn in the economy, women seem to fare worse than their male counterparts. As indicated by Connor (2010), in the UK, the resulting contraction of the TV industry saw women lose their jobs at a rate of six times that of men, falling to only 27% of the workforce in 2010. Women as a group are consistently faring worse than men, whether that is due to lower relative numbers, in pay or seniority. This is not only true in advertising, the arts, architecture, computer games development, design, film, radio, and television, but it is also true in 'new' fields such as web design, app development, or multimedia (Conor, Gill and Taylor, 2015).

Where women are operating in senior roles in the creative industry, Dodd's (2012) study identified a difference in approach, style, and self-reflection between men and women. More women leaders reported that they felt that lack of confidence had been a hindrance to their career progression at some point, although they remained motivated. The study also identified segregation or polarization of genders, as the findings of the study suggested that men tended to work with men and women tended to work with women. This was in a higher proportion in the creative industries than in the rest of the economy. This may mean that a lack of confidence hinders women's progression in the workplace. It may also mean that women are more open and honest about their feelings of inadequacy than men. Again, this may indicate cultural norms at play, as women may be more encouraged to discuss their feelings and fears.

Gender inequalities manifest in a divide between the creative 'above the line' talent and the 'below the line' film workers, which includes technical and post-production. The 'line' has come to stand for a kind of creative class division, with 'creative labour' above and 'trade and technical labour' below (Jones and Pringle, 2015). Participants in the study described how the insecure nature of the work and long hours, as well as the outcome-driven culture, meant that workers often felt that they had to just accept the difficult conditions of the film industries and accept ignorance of gender inequalities to do the role they loved. Others chose to either not have children or, if both partners worked in the industry, to 'tag-team' and share the care. Women also moved to other roles where they had better access to regular hours, income, and workplace rights. The gendering of production processes meant men and women were channelled into roles that received different remunerations and opportunities for their work. This gendering of roles over time created an industry norm and acceptance of all, including the women working in the industry themselves, who found satisfaction and rewards in their roles and were gender-blind to the inequalities in the industry (O'Brien, 2014). French argues that inequality in these industries needs to be addressed, and misconceptions and stereotypes about women, both on and behind the camera, need to be eliminated. The culture and practices within these industries were not attracting women into the industry and women were leaving the industry due to the long hours culture, often citing the incompatibility of the industries with parenting responsibilities (2014). This is despite some very high-profile successes and accolades in recent years for women in key creative roles in both the Australian film and television industries.

Informal recruitment practices with a reliance on social networks and informal subjective criteria created outcomes that reinforce the status quo and contribute to the way that gender inequality is sustained (Wreyford, 2015). Informal recruitment processes are not conscious or deliberate by those taking part in terms of reinforcing gender inequality but they display an attempt to reduce risk by only working with people who are known to them personally. The use of informal recruitment practices is an important factor when examining recruitment practices from a gender perspective, as there is evidence that reliance on personal networks and informal employment practices have different outcomes for men and women (Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012). Given that most senior and powerful decision-makers are men (and usually white, middle-class), this upholds the status quo and engendering of homophily to facilitate trust (Wreyford, 2015). This use of networking is a frequent way in which creatives find and attract work; therefore, this use of recruiting people known to them excludes a wider, more diverse range of people working in the sector, including women. In creative sectors such as film, people can work on a project for over eighteen months and need to form productive teams quickly and error-free. Therefore, people tend to work with people whom they have previously worked with or via word-of-mouth recommendations from people they had previously worked with (Blair, 2001). Informal recruitment practices become common and more or less built into the business model. To gain consistent and future work, creatives need to constantly self-promote through informal networks (regular drinks and other social occasions) and through using social media, or going wherever, whenever a work opportunity presents itself. In essence, they live their lives as one long ‘pitch’ (Connor et al., 2015). An example of this is the case of interns doing work for no money at all, just for the experience added to their CV and the remote possibility of gaining a paid work opportunity one day (Flegel and Roth, 2014). This culture of insecure employment based on little or no workers' legal rights, as well as the concept of ‘you are doing what you love, be grateful’, reinforces the lack of monetary and esteem values given to the roles and role holders.

There remains the question of the impact of motherhood on women who work in the creative industry and the gendered consequences of these working conditions and practices. The review of the literature revealed that women either leave the industry or remain in the creative industry albeit in a different role, and/or progression opportunities are hindered as they are more constrained by factors such as working long hours and juggling childcare and opportunities for informal networking (Conor, Gill and Taylor, 2015; French, 2014; Jones and Pringle, 2015; O'Brien, 2015). Women feel they need to choose between a career in a role and environment they love or motherhood, due to fragmented work opportunities and insecure work environment. It would appear, despite decades of feminism, that the responsibility for child-rearing and housework resides predominantly with women (Patterson, Mavin and Turner, 2012). It is not just gendered inequalities within the home environment that negatively impact women's career projection within creative industries; rather, it is the cultural, political, and societal norms and expectations that reinforce this status quo and gendered outcomes. This is seen and frequently cited as a women's problem or issue, and consequently, the criticism for this phenomenon is not levied towards the creative industries (and other industries) for not having appropriate practices and cultures that support and nurture the development and potential of a high percentage of their workforce and potential workforce (Ruth Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013).

2.4.4. Gendered nature of architecture and photography industries

The gender disparities in architecture are historic and deeply embedded. Women in Architecture, a charity set up by a group of volunteers in the UK whose mission is to improve workplace equality and inclusion for women architects in construction, state in their 2022 Manifesto that they want:

> "…to tackle the deep-rooted, well documented gender disparities within the profession and education." (Women in Architecture UK, 2022)

While overall, 71% of those on the Architects Register at the end of 2019 were male and 29% were female, the gender split for architects under thirty years of age was exactly 50/50 (Architects Registration Board, 2019). Despite the gender parity among young architects, the overall figures for 2019 confirm continued serious diversity issues in the profession, including an indication that just 1% of architects are Black. These figures correlate to The Future of Women in Architecture Report findings, with nearly two-thirds of the respondents being under forty years of age (noting that it a takes a minimum of seven years to qualify, this is considered as early career in this profession). The report also identified that currently as a profession, architecture is not a diverse or inclusive profession and is suffering from a brain drain, as women leave early in their careers, often due to the low pay, long hours, and the lack of flexibility and support around childcare. Women are more likely to be considered as early career and therefore hold junior roles in architecture companies. They are therefore consequently under-represented at senior and board levels. In terms of ethnicity, three-quarters of the respondents to the survey identified themselves as white, with half of those from the UK (Women in Architecture, 30 September 2021), again highlighting the lack of diversity in the profession.

A case which gained high profile media attention was that of Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London. Former students made complaints regarding sexism and racism experienced, including inappropriate comments on appearance and race, whilst studying at Bartlett, with allegations going back a decade (Guardian, 21 May 2021). These allegations led to an environmental investigation of the Barlett School of Architecture, undertaken by Howlett Brown (9 June 2022). One of the findings of the report on Bartlett highlights issues of power structures and power imbalances, leading to power protectionism cliques often referred to as a 'boys' club'. The significant imbalance of gender in architecture contributes to the power imbalance that may continue through women's careers. In addition to the gender imbalance, there is a complete lack of ethnical diversity with architecture professionals; thereby, gender inequality is compounded by further discrimination, intersecting with class, disability, sexuality, race, and other barriers. The masculine dominance prevails beyond the walls of individual architecture firms into the wider structures and bureaucracies framing the profession. For example, clients responsible for commissioning designs, local authorities, and other political bodies - all of the decision-making bodies - are dominated by a masculine discourse and function as a social orientation (Fowler and Wilson, 2004).

Even once a woman has navigated through the barriers and secured a role as an architect, she is working in an environment in which she is often in the minority. In comparison to their male counterparts, there are very few women working in senior roles (Dezeen, 16 November 2017). Their experience differs from their male counterparts in that they experience reduced employment security, often earn less, and often occupy less secure positions (Caven, et al., 2012). Given architecture is a precarious profession characterised by periods of 'boom and 'bust' depending on economic conditions (Sinden, 1998), the self-employment route is an even more precarious one. To navigate the path of a self-employed architect, women must develop entrepreneurial behaviour. Despite women in architectural firms being in a minority, there appears to be little evidence of 'sisterhood' in terms of trying to help or encourage other women (Caven et al., 2012). Indeed, women who work in the industry develop 'usurpatory' strategies in response to the masculinity of the profession and the construction industry as a whole (ibid).

It is widely acknowledged that having children changes the working lives of female architects disproportionately more than those of their male counterparts (Fowler and Wilson, 2004). There is an assumption that if they are not able to 'play by the rules' and continue to work very long hours and work in continuous full-time employment, they are denied equality of opportunity (Sang and Dainty, 2009). This situation leaves women with little option other than to abide by the 'rules' and conform to the cultural expectations of their employer by continuing to work long hours to progress their careers. A survey showed that around two-thirds of women architects have taken time off or opted for part-time work, usually because of children (Architecture Today, 1993). The culture in architecture is marked by the discipline of long office hours and by a demanding task discipline (Thompson, 1967). Alongside project deadlines, appointments with clients encroach on the architect's leisure time. Given this context, the effect of women's responsibilities for children continues to be disadvantageous. Therefore, in these circumstances, women can only cope by going part-time. Such a strategy risks marginalisation (Adams and Tancred, 2000) and can be considered career-limiting.

Photography can be considered to be challenging societal expectations, as women are supposed to be the viewed, not the viewer. Traditional conventions hold that women are meant to be the camera’s subject, not its operator. They constitute the bodies of the ‘surveyed’, not the surveyors (Berger, 1972:47). Women photographers are subverting the established ideology (Somerstein, 2021) by challenging the associated ideology around women’s roles and expectations. They are challenging the power dynamics between photographer and subject. The structure of the photography industry differs from that of architecture, in that photographers do not have to be registered with a professional body to practice. This means that photographers can work in different geographical locations around the world and often do. Therefore, the industry is more globally homogenous, and photographers face similar issues in different countries. Differences are more likely to be identified between photography sectors, and it is this which has the greater impact on the gendered nature of the profession. The notion that some professions or occupations may not be a suitable choice for women is evident in the wider literature, labelled ‘gender essentialism’, and is often cited as a reason for the horizontal segregation of the labour market (Charles and Grusky, 2004; Hakim, 1979). Horizontal segregation of the labour market is evident in the photography sector, with men and women located in different sectors of the industry. Some sectors of the industry, such as news and sports photography, are dominated by men. Women photographers tend to be in areas that could be considered more historically female, such as fashion, portraiture and environmental work (Hadland and Barnett, 2018). This suggests a more male perspective on the world’s news, which filters down to a largely male visual perspective on what is and is not newsworthy (ibid). News stories taken from a masculine perspective, such as those about the public sphere, economics and elites, are considered to have greater ‘symbolic value’ (Djerf-Pierre, 2007:97). Women have historically been discouraged from entering photojournalism, as it was not considered an appropriate occupation for women. It is still considered to be lonely and risky for women, who face both sexism and physical danger at work (Thomas, 2007).

Aside from the loneliness and any physical risk women photographers may face, there are other features which may make it less open to women. Whether through choice or necessity, many women are still undertaking most of the unpaid care work in the home (Gash, 2008; Hakim, 2000). This is particularly heightened if women have young families. Given this gendered imbalance in childcare and associated career breaks for women, it has been argued that men and women will invest differently in their human capital (Becker, 1985). Human capital refers to the amount of knowledge and skills a person has accumulated through education, training, or experience. Specialised human capital (Tam, 1997) refers to individuals investing in occupation, firm, or industry-specific training that has little value outside of the setting in which it was gained. Women are more likely to avoid occupations that require large amounts of specialised human capital because they expect to take career breaks so will opt to invest in more "portable" general human capital (Becker, 1985). The need to consider and invest in more 'portable' general human capital may influence women's entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial behaviour (Hadland and Barnett, 2018). The need to invest in more 'portable' general human capital can be further evidenced by a study which found that more women photojournalists benefited from having a university education than men - 83 per cent of the women compared to 69 per cent of the men (ibid). The higher percentage of female photographers with a university education compared to their male counterparts could indicate that female photographers are more likely to invest time in qualifications that are more portable, such as university degrees. The concept of 'portable' general human capital is significant, as due to shifts in the industry, most photographers work freelance (Hadland and Barnett, 2018) and therefore need to exhibit entrepreneurial behaviour. Drawing further upon the concept of 'portable' human capital, women photographers tend to be more versatile, deriving income from a wider range of sources and activities, using a more diverse set of technologies, but also suffering more acutely from the perils of erratic income and infrequent commissions (ibid).

2.4.5. The role of higher education in shaping female students' entrepreneurial outcomes

The role of pedagogical provision of entrepreneurship education by higher education has become increasingly important in recent years, with an emphasis on promoting enterprising attitudes in graduates. This has been underpinned by a governmental policy drive for all business and other higher education students to be more entrepreneurial. This is reinforced by the belief that it enables graduates to exhibit positive, marketable skills set against an economic backdrop of increased pace, unemployment, and turbulence of social and economic change (Farny et al., 2016). There are two aspects to the influence of higher education on entrepreneurial outcomes: the teacher/student relationship and the conditions of the education delivery (Johannisson, 2016).

Rae argues that the teacher/student relationship is multi-faceted and has the potential to shape entrepreneurial outcomes and define the 'emergent entrepreneur' (Rae, 2004). The conditions of the education delivery in effect provide the context and content for shaping entrepreneurial outcomes. Both aspects have relevance and consequence from a gender perspective, as neither can provide a gender-neutral canvas for shaping students' experiences and identities. This is especially true given the embedding of the construct of wider social structures and societal norms of gender and gendered roles. It has been suggested that higher education does not challenge inequality and can perpetuate these beliefs. There is a significant gender gap in entrepreneurship (Tegtmeier and Mitra, 2015) and a discourse could account for the role higher education plays in teaching entrepreneurship and continuing to reinforce gendered stereotypes of who and what entrepreneurs are. The percentage of HE student enrolments by personal characteristics in the academic years 2017/18 to 2021/22 is made up of 57% female and 43% male (HESA). The higher percentage of females enrolling in higher education does not directly translate into business leadership, as only 14% of SMEs are women-led (Department for Innovation and Skills, 2011).

Tegtmeier and Mitra (2015) suggest that the teaching of entrepreneurship is a question of valorisation of human capital – how human capital is enhanced through university education. Rae argues that we need to move away from teaching about entrepreneurship to learning about entrepreneurship. Therefore, how entrepreneurship is taught and by whom are important factors in developing future female entrepreneurs (2004). The conditions of education delivery provide the context and the lived experience for students in shaping their entrepreneurial outcomes. Work by Jones developed the concept of a 'fictive entrepreneur' and 'fictive student' to explore how the historical masculinisation of entrepreneurship has informed UK policy and higher education (HE) approaches to entrepreneurship education, as well as the implications of this for female students. Jones discusses how the link between the masculinisation of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial education is highlighted by the gendered nature of the language used in course descriptors (2015). This finding demonstrates the often-subtle masculinisation of education delivery and experience that manifests in a gendered discourse, as well as reinforcement of the assumed masculine norm of a male-gendered entrepreneur, with entrepreneurial activity as something which is done by men. It could, therefore, be argued that the higher education environment reflects the wider socio-economic and male-gendered discourse. Linked to this, Farny et al. (2016) use the concept of 'cult' as an analytical lens when exploring the concepts of entrepreneurship and suggest that the image of the heroic entrepreneur, the cult of the individual, undermines any attempt to present the entrepreneur as inclusive. The drive for marketable entrepreneurial skills upon graduation for female students should be paramount. The embedment of the masculinisation of the teaching of entrepreneurship means that this is not always the case.

2.5. Chapter summary

This review has provided a conceptual framework that has identified links between creative discipline students, factors that shape their entrepreneurial outcomes, and the creative industries from a gender perspective. From the review of the literature, the following identified unanswered questions and knowledge gaps that relate to the study have been identified (see Table 2.1 below):

Table 2.1. Summary of key issues related to the study developed from the literature.

Theme	**Significant issues related to the study were identified in the literature including contributors.**	**Identified unanswered questions or gaps in the literature related to the study**
Creative economy is rising and brings economic benefits to the UK	The creative economy brings wider socio-economic benefits to society as well as financial and economic benefits. See section 2.2.2. for details. Contributors include (De Beukelaer and Spence, 2016; Granger, 2020; Hartley, 2005; Hesmondhaigh, 2013; Leadbetter and Oakley, 2005; Porfirio, Carrilho and Monico, 2016; Evans, 2009; Pratt, 2008; Noonan, 2015; Taylor and Littleton, 2008, 2016; Throsby, 2010).	Are the wider socio-economic benefits that the creative economy brings to the UK fully acknowledged by government policies that drive not just financial growth but enable socio-economic growth?
Characteristics and personality traits that can shape entrepreneurial behaviour	There are characteristics and personality traits identified that shape entrepreneurial behaviour. These include opportunity seeking, locus of control, and willingness to take on risk and make intuitive decisions. Contributors include (Gibb, 2022; Ratter, 2014; Maritz and Donavan, 2015; Morrison, 2006; Caven et al., 2012; Chetty et al., 2014; Gartner, 1985; Granovetter, 1992; Ferreira et al., 2017; Brockhaus and Horwitz, 1986; Hansemark, 1998).	How do these characteristics manifest themselves in creative workers? How do creative workers reconcile the balance between being a creative and being an entrepreneur? Does the context/industry the person is working in make any difference?
Notions of creative identity	The concept of creative identity is influenced by both psychological and sociological factors. Creative identity can be triggered by both extrinsic motivations and intrinsic motivations. Creative workers sometimes experience tension between art and commerce. Contributors include (Randles and Ballantyne, 2018; Frey and Jegen, 2001; Schediwy, Bhansing and Loots, 2018; Beech et al., 2016; Coulson, 2012; Umney and Kretsos, 2014, Uddin et al., 2019; McRobbie, 1998; Taylor and Littleton, 2008 and Gregg, 2011).	How does childhood influence creative identity? When and how do notions of creative identity form? What is the interplay between creative identity and entrepreneurial identity? What are school and childhood influences on career choices? How does higher education creative discipline education shape creative identity?
Creative discipline education	Creative discipline education may favour students who have high levels of social and cultural capital. Opportunities such as work placement, networking, and preparation for employment can be advantages to resource-rich, middle-class students. There are issues of ethnic, gender and social underrepresentation identified concerning the creative industries. Selected literature (Creative and Cultural Skills, 2008; Allen et al., 2012; Lee, 2012; Saha, 2013; Tomlinson, 2007; Haukka, 2010; Comunian et al., 2010; Ashton, 2010). A high proportion of creative workers are educated to a degree level in comparison to the wider UK population. Contributors include (Creative Media Workforce, 2014; Rae, Ed. Henry, 2007).	Is this a historical factor, given that rising numbers of young people from non-traditional backgrounds are coming through the HE system, or it is just a time lag effect? What are the lived experiences of people who have successfully navigated a career in the creative industries? Influence of Work Opportunities/Work Culture and Environment. Students' views on how their gender will influence their career and career opportunities. Is there a variation between different sectors of the creative industries?

Creative discipline education delivering enterprise education	Use of practice educators passing on knowledge of the current industry. Student coursework is project-based and grounded in real-life scenarios. Use of assessment techniques that, to some extent, mirror real-life practitioner–client relationships. Recognition for the need for business and enterprise skills given the high proportion of freelance workers in the creative industries. Contributors include (Carey and Naudin, 2006; Matlay and Carey, 2007; Penaluna and Penaluna, 2009; Brown, ed. Henry 2007; Bridgstock, 2013; Bennet, 2007; Allen et al., 2013).	Does this get recognised by the students and/or creative practitioners? Students' views on how their course has supported their future career plans. Retrospective views from creative practitioners on how their university course and experience supported their career. Creative discipline educators' prior career experience and own university experience influence on their teaching as well as their attitudes and behaviours towards students. Mentors and Role Models and their influence on students and creative practitioners.
Entrepreneurial Identity and entrepreneurial motivations	Entrepreneurial identity is shaped by both the industry environment in which they are operating and the individuals' networks. Individuals believe they can shape outcomes in the outside world, described as the 'locus of control'. Entrepreneurial motivations are linked to self-efficacy or having belief in one's capacity to achieve a goal or a task. Many entrepreneurs are motivated to have freedom in shaping the values and ethics of how they will run their business. Social entrepreneurs' motivations can be linked to a desire for social change. Contributors include (Nicholson and Anderson, 2005; Ogbor, 2000; Clarke and Holt, 2017; Vesalainen and Pihkala, 2000; Down and Reveley, 2004; Warren, 2004; Yitshaki and Kropp, 2016; Rotter, 1966; Bandurra, 1977, 1997, ; Boyd and Vozikis, 1997; Collins et al., 2004, Scarborough and Cornwall, 2018; Rey-Marti, Ribeiro-Soriano and Palacios-Marques, 2016; Germak and Singh, 2010)	What is the interplay between entrepreneurial identity and creative identity?
The term entrepreneurship has masculine connotations.	The historical association of entrepreneurship as a male-gendered construct can have a range of influencing factors on female entrepreneurship. Despite improvements in women's educational levels and attainments, as well as legal and societal changes, there still exists a gender pay gap. A desire for flexibility and having more autonomy over their careers and lives can be a driver for entrepreneurship for some women. The option of setting up their own business is seen as a better alternative to frustrations of corporate employment by some women. For some women, life events, such as having children, is a driver for entrepreneurship, as it is seen as providing greater flexibility and the ability to work from home. Contributors include (Bird and Bush, 2002; Mirchandani, 1999; Lewis, 2006; Marlow and Patton, 2005; Marlow and Swail, 2004; Greene, Han	Do these themes concur with the participants' experiences within the study?

	and Marlow, 2013; Carter and Shaw, 2006; Bhide, 2000; Carter, 2000; Ahl, 2004; Shabbir and Di Gregorio, 1996; Heilman and Chen, 2003; Duberley and Carrigan, 2013; Lewis et al.,2015; Hochschild, 1990; Baxter, 1997; Baxter, 2000).	
The experiences of women working in the creative industries. Underrepresentation at a senior level.	Low representation of women at senior levels across all sections of culture and media. The impact of this is that there is a lack of women in senior and decision-making roles. The creative industries are notorious for having long hours and precarious working patterns. There appears to be a gendered division in the types of roles undertaken by women. Horizontal and vertical segregation seems to channel men and women into different types of roles. This gendering of roles over time creates an accepted industry norm. Contributors include (Fawcett Society; Conor, Gill and Taylor, 2015; Dodd, 2012; Henry, 2009; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2015; Pratt and Jeffcutt, 2009; Dodd, 2012; Bielby, 2009; Blair, 2001; French, 2014; Jones and Pringle, 2015; Wing-Fai, Gill and Randle, 2005; Wreyford, 2015; Connor, 2010; O'Brien, 2014; French, 2014).	Does horizontal and vertical segregation of channelling men and women into different roles apply in architecture and photography? Creative practitioners' views on how their gender shaped their career and career opportunities. How gender influenced creative practitioners' creative entrepreneurial outcomes.
The experiences of women working in the creative industries. Informal recruitment practices.	Informal recruitment practices and social networks are a prevalent way to find work in the creative industries. The use of social networks and informal recruitment practices have different outcomes for men and women. This use of informal recruitment excludes a more diverse range of people working in the sector, including women. Contributors include (Wreyford, 2015; Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012; Wreyford, 2015; Blair, 2001; Connor et al.; Flegel and Roth, 2014).	How prevalent are informal recruitment practices and social networks in architecture and photography industries? Do informal recruitment practices and social networking disproportionately advantage men than their female counterparts?
The gendered nature of the architecture industry	There are serious diversity issues in Architecture, including lower numbers of women being registered and operating at a senior level. The gender imbalance in architecture contributes to the power imbalance in the sector. Having children disproportionately changes the working lives of female architects than those of their male counterparts. Contributors include (Women in Architecture; Fowler and Wilson, 2004; Caven et al., 2012; Sang and Dainty, 2009; Thompson, 1967; Adams and Tancred, 2000).	Do the architects in this study consider there to be a gender imbalance?
The gendered nature of the photography industry	Horizontal segregation of the labour market is evident in the photography sector with men and women located in different sectors of the industry. Women tend to invest more into more 'portable' human capital, such as further education, than their male counterparts. Contributors include (Berger, 1972; Somerstein, 2021; Charles and Grusky, 2004; Hakim, 1979; Hadland and Barnett, 2018; Djerf-Pierre, 2007; Thomas, 2007; Gash, 2008; Becker, 1985; Tam, 1997; Hadland and Barnett, 2018)	Do the photographers in this study consider there to be a gender imbalance?

In summary, these results provide an understanding of the creative industries' culture and environment experienced by those working in the industry. Drawing upon the findings of the review provides the epistemological framework for the study. Given that a high proportion of people working in the creative industries are graduates, what role, if any, does higher education play in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes? Characteristics and personality traits that can shape entrepreneurial behaviour have been identified for entrepreneurs. This is not so straightforward for creative workers, as they sometimes experience tensions between art and commerce. This can be due to maintaining their concept of their creative identity. Creative identity can be triggered by both extrinsic motivations and intrinsic motivations. This leads to the first aim of this study:

> RO1: To provide a better understanding of the factors which support creative discipline students' career formation and shape entrepreneurial outcomes.

With regards to the role of higher education in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes, the review identified how creative discipline education may favour students who have high levels of social and cultural capital. Creatives do not always identify themselves as 'entrepreneurs', but they may work in an environment that requires workers to exhibit entrepreneurial characteristics and behaviours – how do they manage this discord? This leads to the second objective:

> RO2: To explain the role of higher education in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes in supporting students' preparation for obtaining work in their chosen industry, including working self-employed/freelance.

In addition, there are gaps in the knowledge base regarding the influence of gender in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes. The literature review findings identified several areas in which women are disproportionately disadvantaged in comparison to their male counterparts. These include the underrepresentation of women in senior roles, a gender pay gap, informal recruitment practices and social networks, and horizontal and vertical segregation which channel men and women into different types of roles. This led to the third research objective:

RO3: to examine whether there is a gender difference in the factors shaping entrepreneurial outcomes.

Based on the thematic literature review findings, this study has formulated and developed an appropriate research design to collect and analyse empirical data to address the research problem and achieve the study aims and objectives (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

Chapter Three: Methodology and Methods

3.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodological approach and the data collection methods applied in the study. The chapter is structured as follows: Section 3.2. discusses the philosophical and theoretical approach taken in the research. Section 3.3. provides the methodological framework for this study, including reflexivity and researcher positionality. Section 3.4. provides the data collection methods used. Section 3.5. describes the population of the study, the rationale for this choice, how the sample was selected and recruited, and the sampling methodology. Section 3.6. describes the data collection process. Section 3.7 discusses triangulation and how it has been applied in this study. Section 3.8 describes the data analysis processes and procedures. Section 3.9. discusses issues of validity and reliability and how these are addressed within this research, specifically discussing how the data and methodological approach have been triangulated to ensure an in-depth and robust data set designed to address the research objectives. Section 3.10. describes the ethical approach, process and responsibilities towards the participants and how the security of the data was addressed and implemented.

In Chapter 2, the literature was meticulously examined across three intricately linked domains: creative industries, creative discipline higher education, and gender. The research methodology, mirroring the comprehensive approach of the literature review, was crafted to investigate these areas effectively. Participants were strategically chosen to encompass each facet of the study: practitioners actively engaged in the creative industries, with a specific focus on architecture and photography; undergraduate students pursuing creative disciplines, specifically in architecture or photography; and higher education educators delivering courses in either architecture or photography. This study embraced a comparative framework, employing a multi-method convergent design approach that synergistically combined various research techniques.

3.2 Philosophical approach and theory development

This section commences by summarising the main general philosophical underpinnings that can be applied to a research study: Positivism, Interpretivism, Postmodernism, Pragmatism, and Critical Realism. The theory of critical realism has been used in this study as the rationale and justification for the research design theoretical framework that has been chosen for this study.

Each of the philosophical frameworks represents a way of viewing the world and a particular ontological, axiological, and epistemological standpoint. The philosophical framework of each research project informs us of something pertaining to the ontological position of the researcher, how they interpret the world, their understanding of the concept of reality (questions of *ontology*), their understanding of knowledge and how it is generated (questions of *epistemology*), how they interpret values and ethics within the research process, and how they as researchers manage their values and those of research participants (questions of *axiology*) with regards to the study that is being undertaken (Kumar, 2014; Quinlan, 2011; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016).

The importance of understanding a researcher's philosophy and the impact of their methodological approach has been highlighted in research methodology textbooks (Crotty, 1998; Kumar, 2014; Quinlan, 2011; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016) to ensure rigour and soundness of the research. Quinlan (2011) goes so far as to say that research without a theoretical framework is of limited use, as it is generally confined to the specific context within which it was conducted (p. 108).

Five main general philosophical approaches are discussed below.

3.2.1. Positivism

Positivism is concerned with empirical science and observational facts as the basis for all empirical knowledge (Nickles, 2005). Positive philosophy and positive science can be found in the writings of Francis Bacon (Crotty, 1998), although the term is often attributed to Auguste Comte in one of Comte's writings, the six-volumed *Cours de philosophie positive*, which appeared between 1830 and 1842 (Turner, 2001). Comte asserted that all phenomena are subject to natural *Laws.* The term 'positive law' served to distinguish positive law from natural law (Crotty, 1998; Turner, 2001). Comte's observations have their origins in the natural world and human nature. Positive law, on the other hand, is wrong because it has been forbidden by a legislator, not because it, in itself, is wrong. 'Positive science' is similarly used to describe science that is grounded in empirical evidence, grounded knowledge, and not arrived at speculatively (Crotty, 1998). The evolution of the philosophy of positivism continued in the 1920s in what was termed the Vienna Circle, involving Otto Neurath, Hans Hahn, Philip Frank, and Moritz Schlick. It was from this group that the philosophy of logical positivism emerged (ibid, 1998). The coming of Nazism meant the end of the Vienna Group, as most of its members were Jewish or Marxist (or both) and had to flee Europe (Crotty, 1998). Today, there is an array of definitions as to what positivism means, with as many as twelve possible variables (Crotty, 1998). This variability and array of definitions pose a problematic decision for researchers choosing to select a positive approach – which of the possible twelve variables of positivism should be selected and how this could be applied to a study with reliability and rigour? It is generally agreed that by adopting a positivist philosophical approach, one would epistemologically focus on discovering measurable and observable facts and regularities (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Data would be investigated to explore casual relationships to create law-like generalisations, similar to those produced by scientists (Gill, Johnson and Clark, 2010). The researcher, therefore, acknowledges the importance of remaining neutral and detached from their research and data to avoid influencing the findings (Crotty, 1998). This could be argued to be a strength in reducing the chance of research bias within the sampling frame, methodological approach, and data analysis. In terms of methodology, positivist researchers would use a highly structured methodology to be able to facilitate replication and quantifiable observations for statistical analysis (Gill and Johnson, 2010). Positivism holds the view that there is one objective reality and separates it from consciousness (Quinlan, 2011). It could be argued that this would not be a suitable approach for this study, as participants' views on their career choices and influences on what shaped their entrepreneurial outcomes could be considered highly subjective and not based on one objective reality.

3.2.2. Interpretivism

Interpretivism is concerned with all knowledge as a matter of interpretation and interaction with social reality as a subjective construction (Quinlan, 2011). The origins of interpretivism are often attributed to the writings of Max Weber (1864-1920), who proposed that human science is concerned with *Verstehen* (understanding) (Crotty, 1998). There are several strands of interpretivism, most notably, hermeneutics, phenomenology, and symbolic interactionism (Crotty, 1998). Interpretive research aims to take account of the differences - diverse cultural backgrounds, different experiences, and different circumstances - to discover rich insights into humanity (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). These differences and complexities are considered by collecting what is meaningful to the research participants. The different strands of interpretivism place a different emphasis on how this works in practice. What is meaningful to the research participants could be argued to be subjective and based upon interpretation and making sense of their reality. *Hermeneutics* holds the view that language is pivotal to humans' view of reality, practices, and events that shape and form our understanding (Crotty, 1998). This includes not just language but other forms of communication, including the study of cultural artefacts such as text, symbols, stories, and images (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). *Phenomenology* suggests that we need to try to understand phenomena as they present themselves and put aside prevailing understandings to revisit our immediate experience of them to allow possibilities for new meanings to emerge or authenticate and enhance our interpretive meaning (Crotty, 1998). The practice of phenomenologists is to focus on research participants' lived experiences and their recollections and interpretations of those experiences (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). *Symbolic Interactionism* focuses on the interactions between people. These interactions include conversations and meetings (Crotty, 1998). In essence, interpretivism philosophy emphasises the importance of language, culture, and history (Crotty, 1998) to provide insights and understanding into experiences and reality in our organisations and social world. Given the recognition of social complexity, interpretivism is by nature explicitly subjectivist (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). One could pose an argument for applying interpretivism to this study, as the research participants are exploring their lived experiences, and language and communication are key factors in all human experience. As the study is seeking to explore factors that shape entrepreneurial outcomes from participants at different points of their career journey and in different situations, critical realism would be better suited to address the research objectives as this approach takes account of the combination of both the participants' lived experiences of things in the real world as well as the sensations, which is the participants' interpretation and representation of what they believe is real.

3.2.3. Postmodernism

Postmodernism is associated with a broad variety of developments and has multiple definitions (Crotty, 1998). Docherty (2014) suggests that the debate around postmodernism has never properly been engaged, so it would therefore be futile to offer any simple explanation of the term. Whilst the term was first used in the 1950s, it wasn't until the 1970s in France that the term came into prominent usage through the works of key philosophers such as Jean-Franpois Lyotard, Michel Foucault, Jean Baudrillard, and Jacques Derrida, as well as German philosophers such as Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger (Fischer and Graham, 2014). Despite being ambiguous and not easy to define, Postmodernism has had an impact on many disciplines, from Architecture to Zoology (Docherty, 2014), and spans the three broadly defined areas of culture, society, and theory (Ward, 2010). It is largely agreed to be a rejection of a critique of or questioning of Modernism and Enlightenment modes of thought (Crotty, 2014). Postmodernism is a way of viewing the world in which we are encouraged to consider the concept as opposed to the content (Butler, 2002). It has been described (Crotty, p.212) as a blurring of the distinction between the virtual and the real. Perhaps, as Baudrillard would express, the 'simulation' and 'simulacra' obliterate the distinction between the imaginary and the real (ibid). Foucault suggested that the notion of self is bound up by the social structures and institutions in which we live. Therefore, we cannot claim to stand apart from the exercise of power (Ward, 2010

p. 181). The influence of Postmodernism has impacted a wide range of disciplines. It is arguably embedded in current thinking and ways of viewing the world. It can be suggested that it is perhaps already entrenched in our philosophical and ontological viewpoints about our perception of what is real and what is imaginary. Given that this study aims to provide an understanding of the experiences of the research participants in factors that shaped their entrepreneurial outcomes, the ambiguity and complexity of Postmodernism were considered not to be a suitable philosophical framework.

3.2.4. Pragmatism

Pragmatism is a philosophical tradition that began in the United States around 1870. Its origins are often attributed to the philosophers William James, John Dewey, and Charles Sanders Peirce (Bertman, 2007). The three classical Pragmatists listed are all American, and whilst their doctrines differ, it has been suggested by Bertman (2007 p.6) that the American culture is a determinate factor in pragmatic thinking and, more specifically, the scientific culture of the day. Pragmatism has been described as an evolving philosophical movement, with the associated theoretical ideas and attitudes developed over some time, rather than significant shifts in direction and formulation. In this philosophy, there is no one key philosopher or definitive statement. This broad approach and lack of definitive statement could therefore be problematic in applying a theoretical pragmatic framework, especially for a novice researcher. There are distinct themes underlining pragmatism, and a definition has been offered that pragmatism rejects the idea that the function of thought is to describe, represent, or mirror reality. It instead considers thought as an instrument or tool for prediction, problem-solving, and action (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Therefore, Pragmatism could be a useful philosophical approach in studies that are scientific or require problem-solving and a pragmatic approach. Pragmatists contend that most philosophical topics—such as the nature of knowledge, language, concepts, meaning, belief, and science—are all best viewed in terms of their practical uses and successes. True theories and knowledge are those that enable successful action, as there is a focus on problems and problem-solving and practices to inform future practice as a contribution (ibid). Given this study is not focused on problem-solving and practices, the philosophical position of Pragmatism was discounted.

3.2.5. Critical Realism

Critical Realism, anchored in the intellectual contributions of Roy Bhaskar during the late 20th century, presents a unique philosophical framework that amalgamates transcendental realism and critical naturalism. This synthesis aims to delineate an interface between the natural and social realms, offering a nuanced perspective on the ontology of the world. Originating as a critique of positivism, Critical Realism challenges reductionist approaches and provides a structured and layered ontology, as emphasised by scholars like Fleetwood (2005).

The ontological framework of Critical Realism comprises three stratified layers: the empirical, the actual, and the real. The empirical layer encompasses events directly observed or experienced, the actual layer represents events generated by underlying causal structures, and the real layer encompasses these causal structures and mechanisms themselves. This layered ontology encourages scholars to grapple with the complexity inherent in our understanding of the world, transcending simplistic approaches. In the specific context of the study, the exploration of participant experiences and reflections aligns with Critical Realism's emphasis on 'the empirical.' This construct encapsulates both the lived experiences of individuals in the real world and their interpretations of these experiences. The application of Critical Realism serves as a robust foundation, acknowledging the interplay between empirical observations and the layered processes of interpretation and representation.

Critical Realism theorises that our descriptions of reality are mediated through various filters, including language, sense-making mechanisms, and social context. This recognition of mediation underscores the complexity of bridging the gap between the objective reality of the world and our subjective knowledge of it. Bhaskar (1989) argues for an understanding of social structures to truly comprehend our place in the world, and individuals can develop a sophisticated understanding of these structures over time. The philosophy of Critical Realism embraces epistemological relativism, acknowledging that knowledge is historically situated and arises from social construction. This recognition introduces a layer of complexity, requiring researchers to navigate the historical and contextual nature of knowledge. It emphasizes that knowledge is not independently constructed but arises from agreed-upon social facts through social construction processes. However, this complexity introduces challenges and potential confusion for researchers. The intersection of Critical Realism with Critical Theory further complicates philosophical boundaries, where the nuanced understanding of social structures converges with the transformative aspirations of Critical Theory. Navigating this intersection requires recognising the distinct contributions and limitations of each philosophical perspective.

Margaret S. Archer's seminal work, "Structure, Agency, and the Internal Conversation" (2003), stands as a cornerstone in sociological scholarship, particularly within the nuanced terrain of gender studies. This seminal piece undertakes a profound examination of the intricate dynamics between structure and agency, offering insights that are particularly relevant when applied to the multifaceted and socially constructed realm of gender. Archer's critique transcends simplistic perspectives that often dichotomise gender structure and individual agency. Rather than adhering to reductionist dichotomies, she advocates for a more nuanced comprehension of their interrelation, emphasising the inherent complexity in the relationship between societal gender norms and individual actions (Archer, 2003). The conceptual cornerstone of her theoretical framework is the internal conversation, a cognitive process wherein individuals engage in a reflexive dialogue with external gender structures. This process involves interpreting societal expectations, norms, and values related to gender, ultimately shaping intentional and unintentional actions within the gendered context (Archer, 2003). The reflexive dimension inherent in the internal conversation becomes integral to understanding gendered agency, challenging deterministic views, and highlighting the purposeful, active nature of human actions within the intricate fabric of gendered experiences (Archer, 2003). This perspective aligns with contemporary discussions in gender studies, emphasising the agency of individuals in actively shaping and negotiating their gender identities within the broader framework of societal structures.

Archer's contribution to critical realist theory assumes particular significance within the field of gender studies. By emphasising the role of reflexivity in shaping gendered agency, her work provides a theoretical lens through which scholars can understand how individuals actively navigate and negotiate their positions within gendered social contexts (Archer, 2003). This nuanced understanding resonates with broader trends in gender studies, aiming to transcend simplistic binary frameworks of male and female and explore the complex interplay between gender structures and individual agency. Furthermore, Archer's theoretical framework aligns with the broader trajectory of gender studies scholarship, where there is an increasing emphasis on moving beyond binary frameworks. The acknowledgement of the multifaceted nature of gendered experiences and the interactive nature of individual agency within the socio-cultural landscape is a pivotal aspect of contemporary gender studies discourse. In conclusion, "Structure, Agency, and the Internal Conversation" not only offers a nuanced exploration of the relationship between gender structure and agency but also challenges reductionist perspectives within the realm of gender studies. Archer's emphasis on the internal conversation as a reflexive mechanism underscores the active nature of gendered agency and contributes to ongoing discussions within gender studies, pushing for a more comprehensive understanding of the intricate interplay between gender structure and agency (Archer, 2003).

The significance of Archer's earlier work, "Being Human: The Problem of Agency" (2000) is particularly pronounced when applied to the complex landscape of gender studies. In this seminal piece, Archer engages in a meticulous examination of prevailing deterministic and individualistic perspectives within the discourse on agency, prompting a critical evaluation of their implications in the context of gendered structures. In the realm of gender studies, Archer's critique offers a theoretical foundation for understanding the complexities characteristic of gendered agency. Her call for a more sophisticated understanding challenges reductionist dichotomies that oversimplify the intricate dynamics between gender structures and individual agency. This perspective aligns with broader discussions in gender studies literature that seek to move beyond binary frameworks and embrace a more nuanced exploration of the multifaceted nature of gendered experiences.

Archer's critical realism theoretical framework proves particularly enlightening when applied to gendered contexts. It transcends theoretical considerations to underscore the relational aspects of agency within cultural and social contexts specific to gender (Archer, 2000). Her assertion that intentional actions are intricately interwoven within the fabric of gendered norms and expectations emphasises the need for a nuanced examination of gendered agency. This aligns with contemporary gender studies scholarship that recognises the interactive nature of individual agency within the broader socio-cultural landscape. Within the discourse on gender, "Being Human: The Problem of Agency" serves as a foundational text that challenges reductionist perspectives and encourages scholars to adopt a more comprehensive understanding of gendered agency within broader social contexts (Archer, 2000). Archer's call for scholars to re-evaluate conceptualisations surrounding human agency takes on added significance within gender studies, urging researchers to adopt a more nuanced, relational, and context-aware approach in the exploration of gendered agency. The enduring impact of "Being Human: The Problem of Agency" lies in its capacity to stimulate nuanced discussions within gender studies, emphasising the interplay of individual intentions and societal influences in shaping agency within gendered contexts (Archer, 2000). As gender studies continually evolve, Archer's work remains foundational, providing a theoretical framework that challenges and refines scholars' conceptualisations of gendered agency within the complex tapestry of societal dynamics (Archer, 2000). In essence, this study aligns with the philosophical underpinnings of Critical Realism, emphasising the intricate interplay between empirical experiences and the layered processes of interpretation and representation. It navigates the challenges posed by the complexity of social structures, recognising the historical and contextual nature of knowledge.

This study acknowledges the inherent complexities at the intersection of Critical Realism and Critical Theory, contributing to a nuanced understanding of the research context (Bhaskar, 1989; Fleetwood, 2005). Critical Realist researchers adopt a reflective approach to understand their ontological position, recognising the potential influence of their social-cultural background and experiences on their research activities (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2016). In line with this perspective, the utilization of research diaries becomes a valuable tool for introspection and self-awareness. The incorporation of research diaries in the methodological framework aligns with the recommendations of scholars like Nadin and Cassell (2006), who advocate for the use of such diaries in the field to create an opportunity and space for researchers to reflect on the intricacies of the research process. This methodological choice not only facilitates a deeper understanding of the researcher's ontological stance but also allows for a nuanced exploration of the subjective dimensions that may shape the research journey. The research diaries, functioning as a primary data source, serve as a rich repository of the researcher's reflections, thoughts, and insights throughout the research process. This intentional and systematic documentation provides a layer of transparency and reflexivity, allowing the researcher to acknowledge and critically assess their own positionality within the research context. Moreover, the inclusion of research diaries aligns with the broader ethos of Critical Realism, emphasising the importance of acknowledging and navigating the subjective elements inherent in the research process. In summary, the incorporation of research diaries in the research methodology reflects the commitment of Critical Realist researchers to self-reflection and awareness of their ontological position. By providing a dedicated space for introspection, research diaries contribute not only to the researcher's understanding of their own perspective but also enhance the transparency and reflexivity of the overall research endeavour.

3.2.6. Comparison of five research philosophies

The table below (Table 3.2) provides brief definitions concerning the five widely used philosophical frameworks discussed above and their typical methods.

Table 3.1. Comparison of five research philosophies. Source (Saunders et al. 2016 pp 136 – 137 and Lincoln, Lynham and Guba in Denzin and Lincoln (Ed). 2011 pp 97-128; adapted by the researcher 2017)

Philosophy	Brief definitions	Typical methods
Positivism	The ontological position argues there is one true reality (universalism) This position is granular and ordered. The epistemological position includes observational and measurable facts, law generalisations, and causal explanations and predictions as a contribution. The axiological position takes the stance that the researcher should be detached, neutral, independent of what is being researched, and objective.	In large datasets, measurement is typically quantitative and deductive, but more often quantitative.
Critical Realism	The ontology provides a stratified/layered perspective (the empirical, the actual, and the real) combined with objective structures and causal mechanisms. The epistemological position includes facts as social constructions—historical causal explanation as a contribution. The axiological position acknowledges value-laden research. The researcher acknowledges bias by world views, cultural experience, and upbringing. The researcher should be as objective as possible and try to minimise bias and errors.	Range of methods and data types to fit the subject matter. Reductive, in-depth, historically situated analysis of pre-existing structures and emerging agency.
Interpretivism	The ontology provides the nature of reality as complex, being socially constructed through culture and language. There are multiple meanings, interpretations, and realities. The epistemological position suggests that theories and concepts are too simplistic. There is a focus on narratives, stories, perceptions, and interpretations. They are providing new understandings and worldviews as a contribution. The axiological position is that research is value-bound and that researchers are part of what is being researched and are subjective. The researchers' interpretations are key to their contribution.	As evidenced by epistemology, typically these studies are inductive. Small-scale samples, in-depth investigations, and qualitative methods of analysis.
Post-modernism	The ontology argues the nature of reality is complex and rich, and is socially constructed through power relations. Some meanings, interpretations, and realities are dominated and silenced by others. The epistemology of what counts as 'truth' and 'knowledge' is decided by dominant ideologies. There is a focus on repressed meanings and voices, exposure of power relations, and the challenge of dominant views as a contribution. The axiology acknowledges the researcher and research embedded in these power relations. It notes that some research narratives are represented and silenced at the expense of others. The researcher is suggested to be radically reflective.	In-depth investigations of anomalies, silences, and absences. Typically deconstructive. Range of data types, typically qualitative methods of analysis.
Pragmatism	The ontological position notes the nature of reality as being complex and rich. The external reality is the practical consequence of ideas. There is a flux of processes, experiences, and practices. The epistemology suggests a practical meaning of knowledge in specific contexts. True theories and knowledge are those that enable successful action; there is a focus on problems and problem-solving and practices to inform future practice as a contribution. The axiology argues for value-driven research. The research is initiated and sustained by the researchers' doubts and beliefs. The researcher is reflexive.	The research follows problems and research questions. Range of methods: mixed, multiple, qualitative, quantitative, and action research. There is an emphasis on practical solutions and outcomes.

3.3. Methodological framework for this research study

The research methodology framework is outlined in the diagram below. Each of these stages is discussed and justified below.

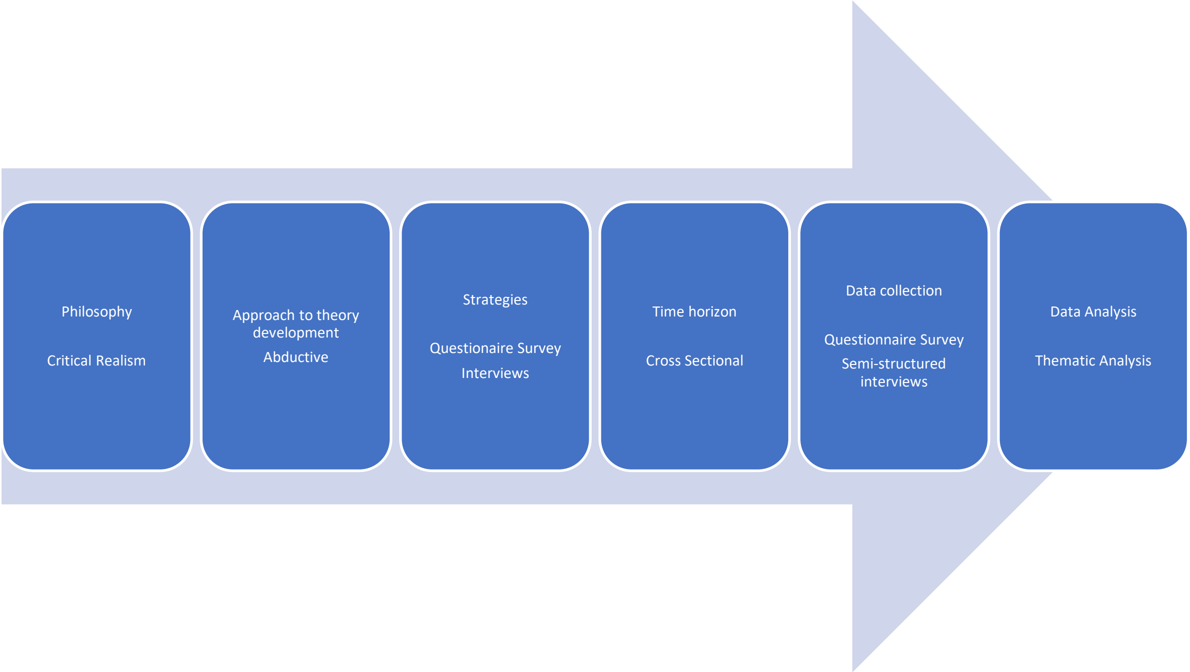
Philosophy
Critical Realism
Approach to theory development
Abductive
Strategies
Questionaire Survey
Interviews
Time horizon
Cross Sectional
Data collection
Questionnaire Survey
Semi-structured interviews
Data Analysis
Thematic Analysis

Figure 3.1. The research philosophy, approach, data collection techniques, and analysis procedures

3.3.1. The philosophical approach - Critical Realism

The application of Critical Realism, a philosophical framework rooted in the contributions of scholars like Roy Bhaskar and Margaret S. Archer, provides a solid foundation for the study at hand (Bhaskar, ed. Archer, M. et al., 1998). Bhaskar's critique of scientific practices, particularly within the confines of a laboratory, brings to light the limitations of closed systems, emphasizing the necessity of viewing the social world as an open and complex system (Bhaskar, 1998). Extending this perspective, Archer highlights the underlying relational nature of social structures and their connection to the structures of the universe (Archer, 2003). In adopting a Critical Realist lens, this study recognises social reality as stratified, deep, open, and complex, acknowledging the multi-determined nature of the social world (Pawson and Tilly, 1997).

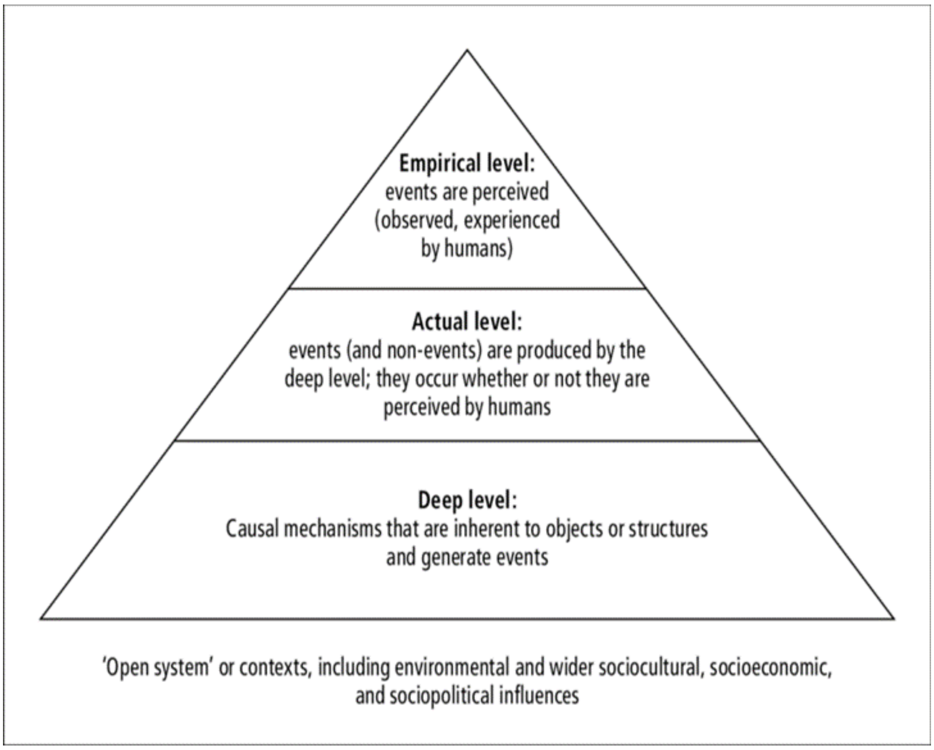
Empirical level:
events are perceived
(observed, experienced
by humans)
Actual level:
events (and non-events) are produced by the
deep level; they occur whether or not they are
perceived by humans
Deep level:
Causal mechanisms that are inherent to objects or structures
and generate events
'Open system' or contexts, including environmental and wider sociocultural, socioeconomic,
and sociopolitical influences

Figure 3.2. The stratified system of critical realism

The layered ontology within the social structure, as depicted in Figure 3.2, resembles an iceberg, with the empirical level representing experiences captured through the senses. The actual level comprises events that may not be observable, and the real or deep level encompasses generative mechanisms or causal powers responsible for observed outcomes (Fleetwood, 2005). This layered ontology aligns with Critical Realism's emphasis on moving beyond the surface level of empirical data to understand the underlying structures and causal powers shaping social phenomena.

Delving into the concepts of social reality necessitates an exploration of ontology, which interrogates the nature of reality beyond our immediate experience (Gorski, 2013). Critical Realism asserts that perceptual criteria alone are insufficient; a phenomenon must also be causally efficacious to be considered real (Lawson, 2019). The social world's stratified, complex, and open nature challenges the reliance on empirical data alone, necessitating an exploration of what goes beyond immediate perception. Undertaking research in the social world becomes complex due to a network of interacting forces that counteract or reinforce each other (Gorski, 2013). This complexity underscores the importance of considering the context. Social context, shaped by individuals' thoughts and actions, emerges as a causal explanation with significant emphasis on Critical Realism (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). The properties of contexts derive from constituted parts and their arrangement, with causal powers generating effects on individuals and the dynamics between them (Lawson, 2019). Understanding social context requires acknowledging the causal powers embedded in structures and agents, and recognising their role in producing events (Martins, 2006).

Epistemology, or the study of knowledge, is essential in Critical Realism, characterized by epistemological relativism. This perspective acknowledges that contextual conditions influence, but do not entirely determine, knowledge production (Lawson, 2003; Al-Amoudi & Willmott, 2011). Knowledge is viewed as a product of categories, frameworks, and dispositions affected by socio-cultural situations. Applied to this study, Critical Realism becomes a lens through which to examine the operation within an open and stratified social world. The exploration of causal mechanisms facilitating progression from student to practitioner in the creative industries underscores the relationship posited by Pawson and Tilley: "mechanism + context = outcome" (1997: XV). This relationship is not fixed but contingent, emphasising the dynamic interaction between causal mechanisms and their effects (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). Archer's assertion that "we are who we are because of what we care about" encapsulates the interplay between structures shaping individuals and individuals actively reflecting on their context (Archer, 2000). This reflective capacity forms the basis of social identity, emphasising that social phenomena are concept-dependent (Sayer, 1992). The intrinsic connection between causal mechanisms and their social and cultural contexts underscores the need to understand the operation of these mechanisms within the broader socio-cultural landscape.

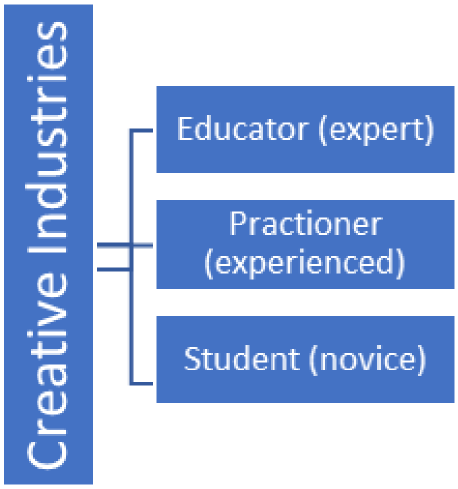

Figure 3.3. The structure and context of the study

Figure 3.3 illustrates the structure and context of the study, emphasising the interplay of structures, agents, and historical context. The literature review provides a historical account of the evolution of the creative industries, situating participants within a broader context shaped by societal changes, political agendas, and policies. The impact of context on participants' realities and mental processing aligns with Archer's conceptualisation (Archer, 1998). The participants, reflective practitioners within the creative industries, were prompted to reflect on their undergraduate experiences, integrating elements of 'retroduction' in understanding their career trajectories. This aligns with Critical Realism's two-step process of engaging with empirical data and mentally processing it to uncover deeper causal mechanisms (Fleetwood, 2005).

In conclusion, Critical Realism serves as a guiding philosophy, allowing for a nuanced exploration of the complexities inherent in the social world. By embracing a layered ontology and recognising the interplay between structures and agents, this approach provides a comprehensive lens for understanding the intricate dynamics shaping individuals' experiences and actions within the creative industries. The enduring impact lies in its capacity to go beyond surface-level observations and explore the deeper causal mechanisms that influence outcomes in this complex and stratified social world.

Building on Bhaskar's and Archer's insights, this study emphasises the relational nature of social structures and the dynamic interplay between structures and individuals. Margaret S. Archer's work, particularly "Structure, Agency, and the Internal Conversation" (2003), contributes significantly to the nuanced understanding of the relationship between structure and agency within the context of gender (Archer, 2003). Archer's critique transcends reductionist dichotomies, urging for a more sophisticated comprehension of the interrelation between societal gender norms and individual actions.

The concept of internal conversation, a cornerstone in Archer's theoretical framework, becomes integral to understanding gendered agency. This cognitive process involves individuals engaging in a reflexive dialogue with external gender structures, interpreting societal expectations, norms, and values related to gender, and shaping intentional actions within the gendered context (Archer, 2003). The reflexive dimension inherent in the internal conversation challenges deterministic views, highlighting the purposeful and active nature of human actions within the intricate fabric of gendered experiences. Archer's work takes on particular significance within the field of gender studies, providing a theoretical lens for understanding how individuals actively navigate and negotiate their positions within gendered social contexts (Archer, 2003). This nuanced understanding aligns with broader trends in gender studies that seek to move beyond binary frameworks and explore the complex interplay between gender structures and individual agency.

In conclusion, the integration of Archer's critical realist perspective enriches the study by offering a more comprehensive exploration of the intricate dynamics between structure and agency within the gendered experiences of individuals in the creative industries. This multi-dimensional approach, incorporating insights from Bhaskar and Archer, enhances the study's capacity to unveil the nuanced relationships that shape individual experiences within the broader socio-cultural landscape of the creative industries.

The literature review underscores the evolutionary trajectory of the creative industries, delineating their transformation over time, influenced by societal shifts, political agendas, and policy changes. Within the broader historical context, this study meticulously examines the creative industries, providing a comprehensive account that encompasses the experiences of participants—those currently working in the field, those who have traversed its realms, and those aspiring to join its ranks. In essence, the interplay of context and structure in participants' professional landscapes (especially for students aspiring to enter the field) significantly shapes their realities and the cognitive processing of those realities (Archer, 1998). Practitioners within the creative industries, serving as participants in this study, were prompted to reflect on their undergraduate experiences. This introspection aimed to unveil the factors instrumental in shaping their career trajectories, influencing entrepreneurial outcomes, and delineating the contours of their professional journeys. It is anticipated that this retrospective reflection involved an element of 'retroduction,' a critical component in understanding how and why these individuals find themselves in their current professional positions. As Fleetwood (2005) contends, the realness of things exists in diverse modes, highlighting the multi-faceted nature of reality. The methodological approach of incorporating 'retroduction' in data collection extended to undergraduate creative discipline students participating in surveys. These students were prompted to envision what future career success would look like for them. Adopting a Critical Realism perspective, this process engages in a two-step progression. First, it involves portraying an understanding of the sensations and events these students have experienced. Second, it delves into the mental processing of these experiences, making sense of them in terms of their current reality and envisioning a future trajectory.

When applied to entrepreneurship, critical realism can provide a nuanced understanding of the social, economic, and institutional contexts in which entrepreneurial activities take place (Hu, 2018). There are several ways in which critical realism can be used to understand entrepreneurship:

Identifying and Analysing Structures:

Critical realism encourages researchers to identify and analyse the underlying structures and mechanisms that influence entrepreneurship. This includes examining economic systems, institutional frameworks, and cultural factors that shape entrepreneurial behaviours (Archer, 1995).

Contextualising Entrepreneurial Actions:

Critical realism emphasises the importance of understanding the context in which entrepreneurial actions occur. Researchers can explore how broader social structures and historical conditions influence the emergence of entrepreneurial opportunities and the actions taken by entrepreneurs (Shaver, 2003).

Exploring Entrepreneurial Agency:

Critical realism recognises the role of human agency in shaping outcomes. In entrepreneurship, this means considering how entrepreneurs navigate and respond to structural constraints and opportunities. Researchers can explore how individuals exercise agency in entrepreneurial decision-making (Fletcher, 2012).

Uncovering Causal Mechanisms:

Critical realism seeks to uncover the causal mechanisms that generate observable events. In the context of entrepreneurship, researchers can explore the underlying processes and mechanisms that lead to the creation of new ventures, innovation, and economic development (Keat and Urry, 1975).

Examining Power Dynamics:

Critical realism encourages researchers to examine power dynamics (Rowbotham, 1992) within entrepreneurial ecosystems. This includes investigating how power structures and inequalities influence access to resources, opportunities, and the ability to succeed as an entrepreneur (Vincent and Wapshott, 2014).

Understanding Institutional Influences:

Institutions play a crucial role in shaping entrepreneurial activities. Critical realism allows researchers to explore how formal and informal institutions impact the entrepreneurial process, from the creation of legal frameworks to cultural norms and expectations (Vincent and Wapshott, 2014).

Addressing Contradictions and Tensions:

Critical realism recognises that contradictions and tensions may exist within social systems. Researchers can explore how contradictions, such as conflicting institutional logic or economic pressures, influence entrepreneurial behaviours and outcomes (Elder-Vass, 2010).

Considering Historical Dynamics:

Entrepreneurship is embedded in historical contexts. Critical realism encourages researchers to consider the historical development of entrepreneurial ecosystems and how past events and structures continue to shape contemporary entrepreneurial activities (Roundy, Bradshaw, and Brockman, 2018).

In summary, critical realism provides a theoretical framework for understanding the complex and multifaceted nature of entrepreneurship. By delving into the underlying structures, mechanisms, and contextual factors, researchers can gain a deeper and more nuanced understanding of how entrepreneurship operates within broader societal systems.

Critical Realism, as the theoretical framework underpinning this study, directs attention to the societal structures that bestow privileges upon certain groups while disadvantaging others. Factors such as race, gender, and class contribute to the intricate interplay of structural forces and causal powers. Individuals, influenced by these external structures, reciprocally influence them. Powers, characterised as emergent properties or entities, shape and are shaped by individuals' actions. Awareness of power structures, encompassing issues like racism and sexism, within societal, industrial, or organisational contexts prompts individuals to act. These actions, in turn, engender feedback mechanisms that either preserve or transform the existing structural context.

The concept of 'emergent properties' in this context is articulated by Archer (1982), emphasising their relational nature, not confined to the elements themselves but intricately connected to them. People possess active causal powers, denoting agency. This agency is manifested in reflective practices where individuals consciously contemplate their actions, contributing to the formation of their social identity. Archer (2000) asserts that individuals define themselves based on what they care about, delineating their ultimate concerns and, consequently, their identity.

Structures, encompassing elements like class, race, sexual orientation, and gender, play a pivotal role in shaping individuals in the first instance. These structural aspects can impact actions in ways that may not align with conscious decisions, introducing a layer of complexity to the determinants of human behaviour. Social structure becomes a significant factor influencing decisions, with individuals navigating the constraints and opportunities inherent in their social context (Archer, 2003). Reflective capacities empower individuals to ponder their situations and make choices, a mental ability inherent in all normal individuals. This continuous process of self-reflection, considering oneself in relation to social contexts, underscores the intricate dynamics between individuals and their socio-cultural environments (Archer, 2007).

Acknowledging the researcher's bias, rooted in sociological and cultural experiences, becomes imperative. This acknowledgement is a conscious effort to manage bias by recognising the conceptual framework of reality. The researcher adopts a stance of reflexivity, striving to maintain objectivity by standing back and recording observations and events. This methodological transparency is further reinforced by the maintenance of a research journal, facilitating an ongoing process of reflection and self-awareness. The researcher's positionality is expounded upon in Section 3.3.4, contributing to a nuanced understanding of the study's context and potential biases.

This comprehensive exploration, grounded in Critical Realism, unveils the intricate interplay between structures, agency, and individual reflections within the dynamic landscape of the creative industries. It underscores the significance of historical contexts, societal structures, and individual agency in shaping the realities of participants, both past and present. The exploration of emergent properties, causal powers, and the relational nature of social phenomena adds depth to the understanding of how individuals navigate and contribute to the evolving landscape of the creative industries.

3.3.2. The approach to theory development – Abductive

As the data was interrogated using a thematic approach to identify themes and explain patterns to generate theory, an abductive approach was used to develop theory. An abductive approach seeks to choose the 'best' explanation in order to explain the unknown at the start of the research process. This is combined with Critical Realism, which is an approach in which the primary focus is on undertaking, as opposed to merely describing, social reality.

3.3.3. Research strategies applied – Multi-Method

Sayer (1992: 118) defines three types of change: purely quantitative, for example, numbers of students completing a degree course; that which is reducible to the movement of qualitatively unchanging entities, for example, student socio-economic status; and finally, that which is irreducibly qualitative, for example, student wellbeing. While the first two can be mathematicised (i.e., data collected quantitatively) in critical realism, the last one cannot. Therefore, possible methodology for a critical realist-based study could include triangulation and multi-method approaches and be able to identify key entities and events (Wynn and Williams, 2020). The researcher needs to be able to explain the majority of events, and perhaps predict some, under consideration. In addition, the researcher needs to determine certain contextual conditions under which the mechanism(s) will or will not operate (Saxena, 2019, 2021).

The study took a multi-method approach (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Denscombe, 2003) and collated multiple sources of data, given the three different study populations participating in the study and the application of different research methods. A mixed-methods approach was utilised as defined by Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007) as one which "combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration" (p. 113). The study predominantly used qualitative research methods in combination with aspects of quantitative research methods in the questionnaire survey design and analysis. This approach was adopted to address the multi-disciplined nature of the research study, combining the three dimensions of entrepreneurship, creative industries, and gender in two creative industries and disciplines.

The multi-method approach was applied using semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire survey. The use of more than one source of data and method collection assisted in confirming the validity and reliability of research data, approach, analysis, and interpretation (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). It is proposed that this approach provides a robust approach and validity and reliability of data. The issues of validity and reliability in this study are discussed in Section 3.9.

The rationale for a multi-method approach was that using qualitative or quantitative methods alone would not have obtained the richness of data from different perspectives (Creswell, 2015) within the three different study populations. The multi-method approach enabled a more comprehensive view and an opportunity to obtain more data within the study than either a qualitative or a quantitative perspective alone. The use of a survey with the student population enabled a broader sample of student views from different HEIs than interviews alone could have achieved. The use of a combination of attitudinal Likert questions and open questions facilitated a more comprehensive data set which could be analysed. The use of face-to-face interviews with the practitioners in population two and educators in population three provided the richness and depth of the personal stories of their career journeys. Both qualitative and quantitative research have their strengths and weaknesses, so by converging both approaches into the methodological design of the study, the strength of the quantitative approach enabled a larger study population to blend with the qualitative approach, providing personal stories and meanings.

The data from Phase One, Phase Two, and Phase Three were compiled and analysed in two separate databases. For Phase One, the Likert attitudinal questions data within the questionnaire survey were entered and analysed within the SPSS software package. For Phase Two and Phase Three, the interview data was transcribed and analysed within the NVivo software package. Once the results were compiled and inferences were drawn from the two databases, the researcher transformed the quantitative database into the qualitative database via the use of data transformation (Creswell, 2015). This enabled the data to be interrogated by investigating the number of times the identified themes appeared in the data which was derived from the qualitative analysis and thereby substantiated or otherwise by the numerical values within the quantitative database. Once the results were merged, the data was interrogated to examine the extent to which the quantitative results were confirmed, or otherwise, by the qualitative results. Both the consistency and differences between the qualitative data and quantitative measures are discussed in this discussion chapter.

3.3.4 Reflexivity and Researcher Positionality

Reflexivity and researcher positionality play crucial roles in shaping the research process, influencing outcomes, and contributing to the nuanced understanding of social phenomena (Harding et al., 1987). Reflexivity involves constant self-questioning and challenges to one's beliefs and thoughts, a process that extends throughout the research journey (Archer, 2009). Archer introduces the term 'bending back' to capture the self-referential nature of reflective thought, emphasizing the subject-object-subject dynamic (ibid). This reflexive practice involves exposing and questioning the ways of conducting research, fostering an awareness of the researcher's influence in the production of data (Hibbert et al., 2010). The concept of positionality is integral to qualitative research, encompassing the researcher's chosen position within a given study (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). Positionality influences the entire research process, shaping how the study is conducted and the subsequent outcomes (Grix, 2019). While certain aspects of positionality, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality, may be culturally ascribed or fixed, others, like political views and personal life history, are more fluid and subjective (Chiseri-Strater, 1996). Identity is viewed as an ongoing relational process, with reflexive practice explicitly addressing how researchers' identities are (re)formed within the research process (Haynes, 2011).

Reflexivity and positionality intersect with the dynamic perspective on identity, prompting questions about how race, gender, and class are made meaningful in relationships (Day, 2012). This contrasts with fixed perspectives that inquire about the impact of the researcher's identity on the research relationship (Day, 2012). A Foucauldian approach to power underscores the notion that power is not intrinsically held by individuals but emerges from discursive struggles over meaning and knowledge production, distributed throughout social relationships (Day, 2012).

In qualitative research, positionality is integral, shaping both the conduct of research and its outcomes (Alvesson et al., 2008). The value of reflexivity lies in its ability to forefront research challenges, recognising how researchers shape the knowledge they produce (Alvesson et al., 2008). Researchers inherently bring value to their work, influencing the entire research process (Creswell, 2013). The researcher's values, guiding the study, are intertwined with ontological and epistemological assumptions, influencing perceptions of social reality, knowledge acquisition, and human nature and agency (Holmes, 2021). The acknowledgement of these values and assumptions contributes to a reflexive approach, illuminating the researcher's embedded role in the study. The researcher's positionality, as described by Holmes (2021), encompasses ontological and epistemological beliefs, shaping the study's design and execution. This reflexive approach seeks to open discussions about the researcher's role and illuminate why it is considered significant (Griffiths, 1998). Understanding the researcher's background, educational journey, and prior research experience is essential for interpreting and responding to the study (Griffiths, 1998).

In the context of gender, reflexivity and positionality gain additional significance. Gender, as a socially constructed category, intersects with the researcher's identity, influencing perspectives, interpretations, and interactions within the research process (Westmarland, 2001). The gender perspective emphasises the importance of acknowledging and critically engaging with gender dynamics in research, recognizing how power operates within gendered relationships (Stanley and Wise, 1990). Researchers are encouraged to reflect on their own gendered experiences and biases, fostering a more nuanced and inclusive approach to qualitative inquiry (Harding, 1991).

Researchers often grapple with questions related to their gendered experiences, biases, and the impact of these factors on the research process. Acknowledging the gendered nature of research allows for a more comprehensive exploration of social phenomena, recognizing the influence of power dynamics within gendered relationships (Westmarland, 2001). The gender perspective within qualitative research underscores the need to critically engage with and reflect on gender dynamics, challenging traditional power structures and promoting inclusivity (Stanley and Wise, 1990).

Moreover, gender intersects with other facets of identity, such as race, class, and ethnicity, further shaping the researcher's positionality and influencing the dynamics of the research process. Scholars advocate for an intersectional approach, recognising the interconnectedness of various social categories and their impact on individual experiences (Crenshaw, 1989). This approach prompts researchers to consider how multiple dimensions of identity intersect and influence both the researcher and the subject.

Reflexivity and positionality, particularly in the context of gender, call attention to the complexities inherent in qualitative research. Researchers are encouraged to navigate these complexities with sensitivity, acknowledging the multifaceted nature of identity and its implications for the research process. By embracing reflexivity and considering positionality, researchers contribute to a more transparent and accountable qualitative inquiry, fostering a deeper understanding of the intricate relationships between researchers, participants, and the social phenomena under investigation.

From now on, at the end of each chapter, I will provide a reflection as the researcher. The researcher's journey leading up to the initiation of this doctoral study is marked by a distinctive trajectory, reflecting a combination of educational pursuits and professional experiences. My academic journey commenced with an undergraduate degree in Social Sciences Combined Studies, Bachelor of Arts (1999), followed by a postgraduate endeavour culminating in a Master of Business Studies (2010). Notably, my educational journey diverges from a conventional path, as there was a hiatus post-schooling, during which I engaged in low-level jobs. Originating from a lower working-class socio-economic background, societal expectations and limited financial resources shaped my initial decision to enter the workforce directly after leaving school at the age of sixteen.

The intersection of work and study, a common experience for many individuals, became a hallmark of my educational pursuits. Juggling employment responsibilities while pursuing a full-time undergraduate degree underscores a lived reality shared by numerous students facing financial constraints. This aspect of my journey establishes a relatability with individuals navigating similar challenges - a connection grounded in shared experiences of balancing work and academic endeavours.

The transition from the undergraduate phase to employment meant securing a position at a Russel Group University, navigating diverse roles over several years. The pursuit of a postgraduate degree unfolded through part-time distance learning, mirroring the ongoing commitment to balancing work and academic aspirations. A pivotal decision arose in 2016 when I opted to relinquish a stable, reasonably paid job with employment benefits, such as a workplace pension, to embark on full-time research. This decision met with resistance from family expectations, exemplifying the complexities inherent in navigating personal aspirations against societal norms and family perceptions of responsibility.

The narrative unveils my identity as a mature student, consistently facing the challenges associated with such a status. Operating as a university senior lecturer in a middle-class environment, I often grapple with perceptions of class identity—both self-perceived and externally attributed. The dynamic of being perceived as middle-class by my family while not identifying as such introduces an intricate layer of self-awareness and situational privilege. The nuanced positioning within socio-economic strata, influenced by both class and gender, contributes to my multifaceted understanding of identity and privilege, intricately woven into the fabric of my experiences.

In the context of the study, it is noteworthy that I have not directly worked in the creative industries, nor as an architect or photographer. This outsider perspective, influenced by a varied professional background, enhances my ability as a researcher to approach the study with fresh eyes and an unbiased viewpoint. The acknowledgement of this outsider status adds a layer of reflexivity to the research process, emphasising the importance of recognising one's positionality in influencing the interpretation of qualitative research.

The researcher's positionality encompasses a spectrum of factors, including motivations, values, cultural background, prior qualitative research experiences, age, level of education, and ideological stances. These facets collectively shape the lens through which the researcher interprets qualitative research. The recognition of culturally ascribed or fixed aspects, such as gender and personal experiences, underscores an awareness of potential predispositions. However, I maintained a conscious effort to refrain from imposing assumptions on contributors' perspectives and worldviews. This commitment to avoiding preconceived notions aligns with my own experiences of being mischaracterised and reinforces an ethos of openness and receptivity in the research process. The process of creating and interpreting data is shaped, to some extent, by the researcher and the 'researched' (Folkes, 2023).

In essence, the researcher's positionality serves as a complex amalgamation of personal history, professional trajectory, and socio-economic context, contributing to a nuanced and self-aware approach to qualitative research. This intricate web of identity is further entwined with the structural conditions of race and gender, acknowledging the additional layers of privilege, bias, and challenges that these dimensions bring to the researcher's perspective (Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1989). The experiences and perceptions of the researcher are not only shaped by individual attributes but are also influenced by broader societal structures that perpetuate inequalities based on race and gender. This intersectional lens adds depth to the understanding of how structural conditions intersect with personal narratives, impacting the researcher's journey and shaping their engagement with the research process.

My position as a white working-class woman has shaped my experiences and the way I view the world. As with all research, the researcher's background and experiences will affect the production, interpretation, and presentation of data and indeed the very focus of the study. I do not attempt to hide my position as a researcher, my interest, or my experience, and I believe that it further contextualises and positions this piece of work.

3.3.5. Time horizon – Cross-Sectional

The data collection process was undertaken over eighteen months. The process varied according to the data collection approach and techniques applied to the different populations participating in the study. The researcher followed the research ethics protocols as laid out by Birmingham City University.

3.4. Data collection methods used – questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews.

The data collection method for Phase One, Population One was a survey methodology approach. The survey methodology approach was deployed by use of a questionnaire survey which was comprised of both quantitative method Likert scale responses and open-ended questions. The data collection method for Phase Two and Phase Three, Population Two and Population Three was qualitative semi-structured research interviews. It was anticipated that these methodological approaches in combination would address the three main research objectives.

The questionnaire survey had a mix of closed Likert questions and three open questions. The questions were designed to explore the relevant themes identified in the literature review. The students were asked to identify what career success would look like for them, as well as how their university experience contributed to and prepared them for their future career. They were also asked whether they had anticipated or experienced how their gender (female/male/other) shaped their future career aspirations and goals. The semi-structured interview questions for the creative practitioners were designed to explore the relevant themes identified in the literature review. The creative practitioner participants were asked questions about how their university experiences supported their career aspirations and career development, such as opportunities for industry placements, engagement with practitioners, role models, and assessment techniques. The participants were also asked questions about the factors that shaped their decision to start their own business, how their university experiences shaped their proficiency towards this goal, and how their gender shaped and influenced their career, or whether indeed it did. The semi-structured interview questions for the creative discipline educators were designed to explore the relevant themes identified in the literature review. They were asked questions about their career to date, how they approached curriculum design and assessment, and what they did to prepare students for gaining work in the relevant creative industry.

All research methods, both qualitative and quantitative, have their advantages and disadvantages. Within this study, careful consideration was given to deploy the combination of the most effective research methods which would address the research questions and the three main research objectives. The research questions in both the questionnaire survey and semi-structured interview schedules were derived from the identified gaps in the literature and mapped against the three research objectives. The question mapping against the identified gaps in the literature review and three research objectives can be found in the appendices. A copy of the questionnaire survey can also be found in the appendices.

3.4.1. Piloting the research instruments

All the research instruments were piloted. The main aim of the pilot was to test the adequacy, reliability, and feasibility of the research instruments (Van Teijlingen et al., 2001). A homogenous sampling approach was used to test out the research instrument for the final year undergraduate photography and architecture students. The instrument was tested out with final year undergraduate creative discipline students at a university in the West Midlands. The pilot had two aims; firstly, to test the adequacy of the instrument and secondly, to undertake a ‘mini version’ of the full-scale study to obtain some preliminary data, which was fed directly into the study and shaped the main data collection. On completing the questionnaire, the students were asked for their feedback in terms of understanding the questions asked, ease of completion, and whether there were any missing or superfluous questions given the research topic and research objectives. Their feedback was considered when revising the questionnaire survey for the main study. In terms of sample size, Fink (2013) suggests that for smaller-scale surveys, a minimum number for a pilot is ten. The actual number for this pilot was eighteen students who fully completed the questionnaire survey. A preliminary analysis of the data was undertaken to ensure that the data collated for the main study was able to investigate the research objectives raised in the study.

A convenience sampling approach was used to test out the research instrument for Population Two, the semi-structured interviews with practitioners. As there were only going to be fourteen interviews conducted in total, the research used a sample of one person to test out this instrument. The participant chosen to pilot the semi-structured interview met the inclusion criteria but worked in a different creative industry than the one chosen for the main study. There were enough similarities for robust testing of the research instrument to be undertaken, and the participant was willing to provide constructive critical feedback on both the adequacy of the research instrument and the researcher's approach and conduct of the interview for this to meet the pilot testing objectives. The interview was transcribed, and an initial analysis was undertaken. The Population Three educators' semi-structured interview questions were reviewed by an educator who had previously worked within the creative industries.

All the pilot questions were asked of the participants about the accuracy, ease of completion, and adequacy of the research instrument. The researcher also asked for feedback on her conduct around appearing neutral to try and reduce researcher bias and advice for making the process go as smoothly as possible.

3.4.2. Deployment of questionnaire survey

The deployment of the quantitative survey questionnaire had the advantage of providing data on a higher number of students than interviews could have achieved within the timeframe and resources available. It also had the advantage of being able to gain some quantitative data for the study and produce statistics about the target population (Fowler, 2014).

The researcher arranged to go into a teaching session, present an overview of the research, and give out the participation information sheet and questionnaire survey in hard copy directly to each cohort of students. This had the advantage of having direct contact with the students and provided a higher response rate than perhaps otherwise would have been achieved (Kumar, 2014; Nardi, 2006). The students were asked if they had any questions about the study and their participation in the questionnaire survey. It was made clear to students that participation in the study was entirely voluntary and entirely separate from their course.

The disadvantages of this research method include a self-selecting bias, in that the population of the study are students who both attended the teaching session the researcher attended and chose to complete the questionnaire survey. It should be noted that the vast majority of students appeared quite willing to do so. A small handful of students across all four cohorts chose to exercise their right not to participate. Also, three students were on an Erasmus visit from overseas and it was mutually agreed that they would not participate in the survey.

Whilst the students had an opportunity to ask questions, it should be noted that as with all questionnaire surveys with a Likert tick response, there is a lack of opportunity to clarify issues or expand on their answers (Kumar, 2014). Another disadvantage that has been identified with questionnaire surveys is that responses cannot be supplemented with other information (Fowler, 2014; Kumar, 2014; Nardi, 2006). Within this study, an attempt was made to address this disadvantage by using open questions where students could provide additional and supplementary information. The students also had the opportunity to discuss their participation and responses with the researcher.

3.4.3. Deployment of qualitative semi-structured interviews

The deployment of the qualitative semi-structured interviews was considered more appropriate to collect the complex career and life narratives of practitioners who are working as either photographers or architects. This approach was particularly useful for collecting in-depth information and life stories (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Silverman, 2014; Silverman, 2017) about their career choices, their undergraduate university experiences, and how these may have influenced their careers and career choices - how their higher education experience shaped their entrepreneurial outcomes, as well as facilitators and barriers in either setting up their own business or aspiring to set up their own business. The disadvantages of this research method include the quality of the data being dependent upon the quality of the interaction, the quality of the data being dependent on the quality of the interview, the questions posed, the interviewees' willingness and articulation in responding to the questions, and the skill of the interviewer (Denzin and Lincoln, 2001; Kumar, 2014; Silverman, 2014). Within this study, an attempt was made to address these disadvantages by piloting the interview schedule, obtaining feedback on the interview schedule from more experienced researchers, and mapping the interview questions against the research questions and research objectives.

The combination of these methodological approaches, methods, and populations selected was designed so the research question could be fully explored from a range of different viewpoints and positions. This gave the methodological framework of the study a holistic approach to investigate this research topic from the angle of the key stakeholders affected, these being practitioners working in the creative industries, creative discipline students in higher education, and educators (in higher education). This approach ensured a robust data set that would be analysed both within and across the three different populations.

3.5 Population of the study

The sample inclusion criteria included the following: the student population were required to be studying either architecture or photography subjects. The survey was shared with final-year students. To ensure that the data could be compared and triangulated, three different higher education institutions were recruited to the study. Likewise, to ensure consistency of both context and comparability of the data sample, the higher education educators included in the study population were educators of the student sample population - in all cases, either the head of the department or the final year lead. This meant that they had direct contact with and taught the students who were included in the sample. The sample of the creative practitioners' inclusion criteria required them to have been working in the respective creative industry for at least one year and to have completed an undergraduate degree in the respective discipline.

Table 3.2. Study population sample

Architecture Discipline/Industry		**Photography Discipline/Industry**	
HEI One	HEI Two	HEI One	HEI Three
Students	Students	Students	Students
Educator	Educator	Educator	Educator
Creative Practitioners		Creative Practitioners	

The sample offered the following benefits. It kept the data population samples situated within the context of the study. There was a direct link and correlation between the views of the students' sample population and the educators' sample population. There was a compatibility of experience with both the culture of the university and the structure of the degree programme.

The sample of the creative practitioners were based in the UK and had completed their degrees in the UK. With population mobility, it was problematic to recruit practitioners who had attended the same HEIs as the other study population. The sample of creative practitioners included people at different points in their careers to give a longitudinal perspective over the whole career span. Therefore, this sample included people who had commenced their career in the creative industries from just over one year, to people who had been operating within that industry for over 25 years, as well as people at different points between. This provided the benefit of exploring the factors that shape entrepreneurial outcomes at different career points.

There were also limitations of the sample group. This study was limited to those higher education institutions that were willing to participate in the study. As indicated above, the preferred option would have been to only recruit creative practitioners who had studied for their degree with the three higher education institutions that participated in the study for comparability. The logistics of this and the time to recruit meant this option was not viable. In the event given that some of the participants had graduated over twenty-five years previously, the comparability of experience was not relevant. Indeed, each participant had their own unique career journey and experience. Themes and patterns were explored across the data sample. It should be stated that in terms of a sample group, other options were considered. For example, the researcher did consider including a female-only population sample given the gender perspective. It was considered this would mean a limitation of the perspectives and a lack of holistic comparability. It is important to note that during this phase, when the considerations and development of the desired sample group and approach were being considered, an appropriate ethical framework, which adhered to the university's ethical research guidelines, was considered.

The study is focused on two creative industries, architecture and photography. These industries were selected as these disciplines appeared to have at the time the disciplines were selected a student population of a balance of males and females. The rationale for this approach was to reduce the potential for gender bias within subject selection in degree choice. Besides, it was deemed that there was a clear link between the creative discipline and the creative industry. Table 3.2 below shows the figures and percentages of subjects of study: females, males, and total. The data was taken from HESA statistics and adapted by the researcher to show only creative discipline subjects. This table shows that these two subjects have a fairly equal proportion of female and male students studying full-time at first-degree level (2011/2012). The actual study sample of participants responding to the survey in Population One of the study includes a higher number of females as opposed to males. See Table 3.4 below for details.

Table 3.3. HESA statistics full-time first-degree students by creative industry subject of study and gender 2011/12 (adapted by the researcher)

Subject of study	Female	Male	Total	% Female	% Male
Architecture	6140	8240	14380	43%	57%
Broadly-based programmes within creative arts & design	75	5	80		
Fine art	10170	3920	14090	72%	28%
Design studies	36655	18660	55315	66%	34%
Music	7205	11675	18880	38%	62%
Drama	14020	6090	20110	70%	30%
Dance	3710	540	4250	87%	13%
Cinematics & photography	9340	9065	18405	51%	49%
Crafts	1065	120	1085	98%	2%
Imaginative writing	2425	1830	4255	57%	43%
Others in creative arts & design	1785	810	2595	69%	31%
Publishing	395	120	515	77%	23%
Software engineering	500	4245	4745	11%	89%

The HESA statistics also demonstrate that creative arts and design subjects have consistent profiling in both the numbers of students graduating with a first degree in these subjects and the profile of students' gender (numbers of females/males/other). There has been very little demonstrable change over five years, from 2012/13 to 2016/17, as indicated in the figure below.

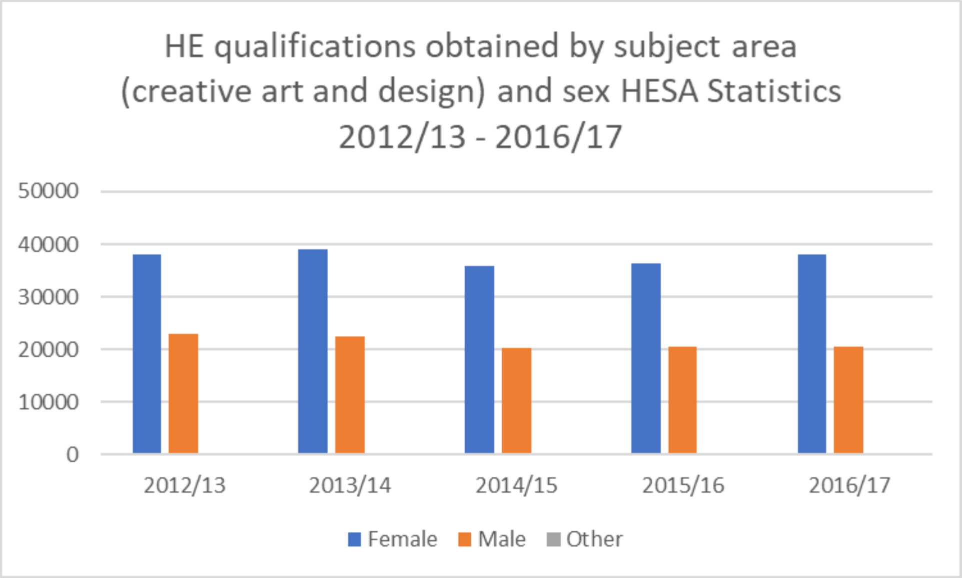

Figure 3.4. HE qualifications obtained by subject area (creative art and design and gender over five years - 2012/13-2016/17. (Source HESA Statistics 2017; adapted by the researcher)

This was a comparative study, both in terms of being located within two different creative industries/disciplines, those being architecture and photography, and the use of three different study populations. The different populations were practitioners currently working as either architects or photographers, mostly freelance/self-employed, final-year undergraduate students of either photography or architecture, and educators of final-year higher education undergraduate students within the disciplines of architecture and photography. The rationale for the inclusion of three different HEIs was to examine the disciplines in more than one student population and in more than one setting to reduce situation context bias. The HEIs were not directly compared to each other. The findings from the student questionnaire survey did demonstrate a consistency of the results across disciplines, not between university settings.

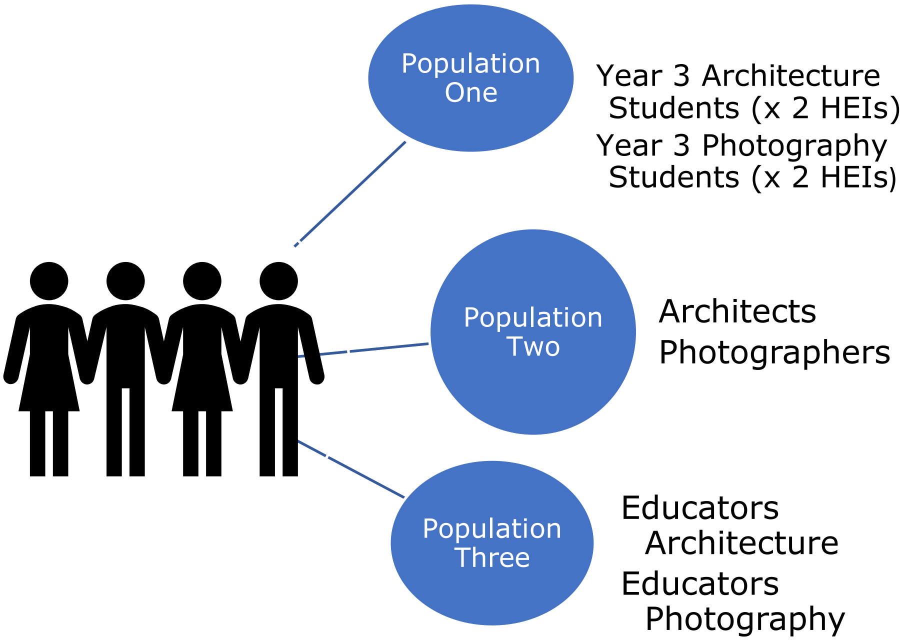
Population One
Year 3 Architecture Students (x 2 HEIs)
Year 3 Photography Students (x 2 HEIs)
Population Two
Architects
Photographers
Population Three
Educators Architecture
Educators Photography

Figure 3.5. The study populations

This enabled the study to review the research question and objectives from multiple standpoints and perspectives, with the objective of fully understanding the factors that shape entrepreneurial outcomes from a gender perspective. This ensured a robust dataset that could be triangulated and analysed to explore emerging themes and patterns from the data.

Population One

The first population in this study was a population of undergraduate final year students, studying either photography or architecture, of all genders. The student population was based on three UK-based higher education institutions (HEI). The first HEI is a West Midlands based university, where the study population was a cohort of final year undergraduate architecture students and a cohort of final year undergraduate photography students. The second HEI is based in the East Midlands, where the study population was a final year cohort of undergraduate students in photography. The third HEI is a university based in the East Midlands, where the study population was a final year cohort of undergraduate students in architecture.

There were ninety-three survey responses in total, broken down as per Table 3.4 below.

Table 3.4. Number of questionnaire survey responses by discipline and cohort and gender

HEI	**Discipline**	**No.**
West Midlands HEI – (A)	Photography	18
East Midlands HEI – (B)	Photography	20
Sub-total		*38*
West Midlands HEI – (A)	Architecture	16
East Midlands HEI – (C)	Architecture	39
Sub-total		*55*
TOTAL		**93**
Gender	Male	38
	Female	51
	Other	2
	Missing	2
TOTAL		**93**

Population Two

The second population in this study was a population of practitioners working as either photographers or chartered architects. Due to the highly competitive nature of having to win projects to be selected for employment within architecture practices, the population included two people (one female and one male) working in an architecture practice. The remaining five respondents were working freelance/self-employed. See Table 3.5 below for details. This range allowed for a greater scope for the understanding of employment opportunities and workplace culture and how this shapes entrepreneurial outcomes from a gender perspective.

Table 3.5. Population Two by code, creative industry, location, gender, and a brief bio.

Code	Creative Industry	Location	Gender	Brief Bio
01FP1	Photography	East Midlands	Female	1-4 years freelance. One year in other roles before setting up practice
02FP2	Photography	East Midlands	Female	5-10 years freelance. Over 10 years in other roles prior. Mature student.
03FP3	Photography	East Midlands	Female	15-20 years freelance. Over five years in other roles before graduation.
04FA1	Architecture	East Midlands	Female	Over 25 years in practice. Not freelance.
05MA2	Architecture	East Midlands	Male	Over 10 years in practice. Not freelance
06FP4	Photography	West Midlands	Female	5-10 years freelance. Over 20 years in other roles. Mature student.
07MA3	Architecture	East Midlands	Male	1-4 years freelance. 5 to 10 years in practice before going freelance.
08FA4	Architecture	North West	Female	5-10 years freelance. 15 to 20 years in practice before going freelance.
09FP5	Photography	South West	Female	1-4 years freelance following graduation.
10MP6	Photography	South West	Male	15-20 years freelance. Worked in another creative industry freelance over 20 years to date before photography.
11MP7	Photography	West Midlands	Male	5-10 years freelance following graduation.
12FA7	Architecture	East Midlands	Female	15-20 years freelance. 1-4 years in practice before going freelance.
13MA6	Architecture	West Midlands	Male	5-10 years freelance. 20-25 years in practice before going freelance.
14MA7	Architecture	East Midlands	Male	2-4 years freelance. 25-30 years in practice before going freelance.

Population Three

The third population in the study was a population of educators working in the same universities and departments as the student population. There were four educators in total, one from each of the departments the study questionnaire survey was conducted in (two male photography educators, one female architecture educator, and one male architecture educator). See Table 3.6 for details. This enabled data to be correlated within the student population and the educator population. Furthermore, the geographical location and Higher Education Institutions Population One students were studying was the same as that of the population of three of the educators.

Table 3.6. Population three by code, discipline, location, and gender

Code	Creative Discipline	Location/HEI	Gender
15ME1P1	Photography	East Midlands	Male
16ME2A1	Architecture	West Midlands	Male
17ME3P2	Photography	West Midlands	Male
18FE4A2	Architecture	East Midlands	Female

3.5.1 Sample and sampling methodology

This study is comprised of three different populations and multiple sources of data, as discussed above. Therefore, the sample and sampling methodology was appropriated to the three different populations and selected to ensure that a robust sample was selected for each of the populations included in the study, ensuring that the individual datasets collated data that enabled synergy and comprehension across the different populations and different methods. This was intended so that the data could be mined both at an individual dataset level and across all datasets. Therefore, the analysis could develop emerging patterns and themes that answered the research question and research objectives. As this study is investigating both the creative industries and creative disciplines, a complete sample frame of the potential population of the study was not available. Therefore, the researcher used nonprobability sampling techniques. The samples that were included in the study were selected to represent the population of the study but clearly cannot be argued to be representative of the whole population of the respective industries/disciplines. All the population samples were selected due to their characteristics being similar to each other within the population, such as stage of the study, subject of study and university, or profession. Homogenous sampling techniques were used (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). This enabled greater depth and exploration of minor differences to be more apparent.

Participants in the research were selected from each of the two creative industries. A judgemental (or purposive) approach (Quinlan, 2011) was used in selecting participants in the research. Those chosen by the researcher were selected because they had both the experience and professional knowledge to inform the research. The inclusion criteria for Population One (students) and Population Three (educators) were that the university offered undergraduate degree programmes in the discipline (architecture and photography) and were based within the Midlands region of the UK. The inclusion of final-year undergraduates for Population One was selected as it was considered that by that point in their studies, the students would have considerable experience of being taught the subject and would be starting to consider their options post-graduation. The inclusion criteria for the selection of the Population Two participants, the practitioners, were as follows: they graduated with a first degree in photography or related creative discipline (e.g., visual arts) or were a chartered architect, and they were either employed or had been running their own business within this industry for at least one year. The inclusion criteria of having a first degree in the creative industry in which they were working was selected to explore their views and experiences on how their creative discipline education shaped their entrepreneurial outcomes within their chosen creative industry. The inclusion criteria of being either self-employed or running their own business for at least one year was selected as this is the point at which businesses either fail or continue to operate (Bloomgarden, 1977). The inclusion criteria selected were designed to explore how their undergraduate experiences prepared them for working within their chosen industry and how their education pedagogic experience and their educational environment helped shape, if indeed it did, their entrepreneurial outcomes.

3.6 Data production process

The researcher conducted the data production process in three phases. It was deemed logical to adhere to the Critical Realism philosophy, noting the structured layer and ontology and pedagogical hierarchy. A sequential multi-phase design to subsequently inform and direct the next phase of data production and analysis was applied. Phase One data collection was undertaken with Population One, the creative discipline students. A questionnaire survey was undertaken. The data from the questionnaire survey was analysed prior to Phase Two data production taking place. Phase Two data production consisted of a series of semi-structured interviews undertaken with Population Two, creative practitioners. Phase Three data production took the form of a series of semi-structured interviews undertaken with the higher education creative discipline educators who taught Population One. The researcher followed the protocol suggested by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) to ensure that protocol was followed to ensure professional researcher integrity was maintained.

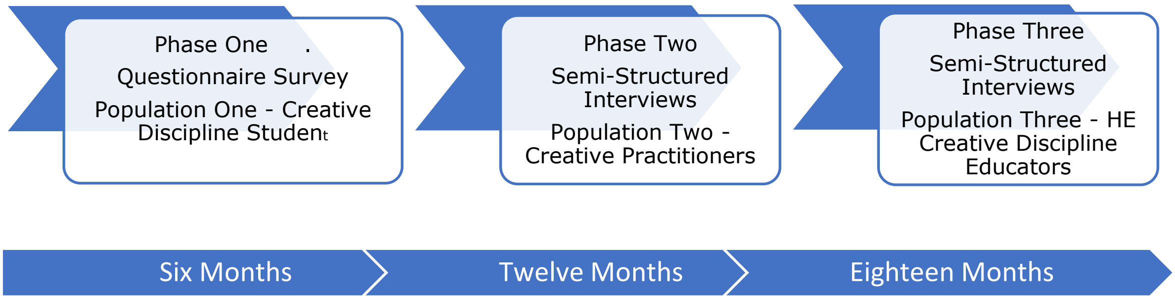
Phase One
Questionnaire Survey
Population One - Creative Discipline Student
Phase Two
Semi-Structured Interviews
Population Two - Creative Practitioners
Phase Three
Semi-Structured Interviews
Population Three - HE Creative Discipline Educators
Six Months
Twelve Months
Eighteen Months

Figure 3.6. Data production process and timeline

Phase One

The researcher met with each cohort of students in turn. In advance of the survey, the researcher contacted the relevant Head of Department, sought permission to access the students, gave a brief outline of the purpose of the study, and requested permission to undertake a survey with their final year undergraduate students (either photography or architecture). Often the Head of Department would ask for further information, including confirmation that the study had been granted the necessary ethical permission. The requested information would be sent, and often the researcher needed to follow-up when after some time, she had not received a response. Several HEIs were contacted who met the inclusion criteria and either did not respond or responded positively but did not respond to requests for a date to go in to collect the data. Once the agreements were in place, the researcher arranged a suitable time to go into the University's Department and meet with the students to conduct the interview. This was done with the agreement of the relevant academic staff involved, usually either the Head of Department or the Head of Programme.

Upon meeting the group of students, the researcher introduced herself and provided an outline of the aims and objectives of the study. The researcher explained that she would be seeking their agreement to complete a questionnaire survey. She outlined the purpose of the questionnaire survey and indicated how long it would take to complete it. She emphasised that participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and the students did not need to provide any personal details such as their name or address. They could provide their contact details at the end of the survey if they wished to participate further in this study or any follow-up study. The participants were given the participant information sheet and questionnaire survey. Copies of the participant information sheet, consent form, and questionnaire survey are included in the appendices of this thesis. Those students who were willing to participate were asked to complete the survey within the room and return it to the researcher upon completion. The researcher thanked the students for their participation in the study. Following the completion of each survey round, the researcher wrote up her reflective notes and observations in her research journal. The completed questionnaire surveys were stored securely, and the open question responses were transcribed into the analysis software in preparation for analysis.

Phase Two

The researcher identified potential participants via web searches using keyword searches, the professional body RIBA website, and the website of the Architects

Registration Board (ARB). The prospective participants were contacted by the researcher via email with information about the study and the benefits of participation and followed up with phone calls asking if they would be willing to participate. Once interviews were underway, the researcher also applied the cascading technique (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011), where participants were asked if they knew of another architect or photographer who would be willing to contribute to the study.

If they expressed an interest, the participants were sent the participant information sheet and the participant consent form in advance of the interview. The participants were told that the researcher would be seeking to audio record the interview and provided an explanation as to how the data would be used and stored for the study. The data production took the format of a semi-structured interview schedule designed for the Population Two participants. All interviews were conducted in either the participants' workplace or a quiet public space.

Before the interviews were conducted, the participants were asked if they had had an opportunity to read the participant information sheet. The researcher gave a brief overview of the aims and objectives of the research study and asked if they had any questions about it. The researcher then reiterated the points within the participation sheet that their participation was entirely voluntary and at any point during the interview, they could request to stop. The researcher emphasised that they did not need to provide a reason for this choice, nor would she ask for one. The researcher also stated that the participants could decline to answer any questions if they wished. The researcher asked if they were willing for the interview to be audio recorded. The researcher explained that any data and responses that they provided would be only used for the purposes of the study and anonymised. All paper and electronic data produced would be stored securely following Birmingham City University’s data governance protocols. Participants were then asked to read and sign the participant consent form. All participants were asked if they were agreeable to having the interview audio recorded. At that point, the researcher asked again if they were willing to have the interview recorded and only when the participant agreed was the recorder switched on.

The interview was conducted, and upon conclusion, the researcher switched off the audio recorder and thanked the participant for their time and participation in this study. The interviews lasted around one hour. Immediately following the interview, after the researcher had left the participants, she would write any notes and observations in her research journal, also noting the name of the participant, location of the interview, the time of day that it took place, how long the interview took, and any other salient points. All interview recordings were downloaded and transcribed using intelligent verbatim by the researcher.

All papers and electronic data collected were stored securely following Birmingham City University's data governance protocols.

Phase Three

The educators had already been contacted and the researcher had met with them all individually when seeking agreement and access to the students, Population One. During this process, the researcher also gained agreement with the educators to contribute to the study. Subsequently, the researcher followed up to arrange a convenient date for the semi-structured interviews to take place. The same research protocols were followed as for the practitioner interviews.

A copy of the participant information sheet, the interview schedules, the survey questionnaire, and the participant consent form is placed in the appendices of this thesis.

3.7. Triangulation

Neuman defines triangulation as to "…learn by observing from multiple perspectives rather than by looking from a single perspective" (2014:166). This study has taken multiple perspectives from three different populations and in multiple contexts, from university campuses, public spaces, and workplace settings. The research drew on a range of evidence, literature review findings, survey data, and interview data. The study encompasses both data triangulation and method triangulation (Flick, 2018) with the use of multiple sources of data; this includes different people, at different times, and in different locations, to gather different perspectives with the purpose of validating the data. The study achieved method triangulation (Denzin, 1970; Wilson, 2016) with the use of more than one method questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews to gather the data. Individual interviews can be a powerful tool for covering topics in depth (Silverman, 2017). In this study, both individual interviews and questionnaire surveys have been used to address the questions around different approaches yielding different results. The methodological approach in this study adds to the depth, breadth, and complexity of the research.

3.8 Data analysis

There were two data production techniques used in the study. Phase One (Population One) employed mixed methods by the application of a survey approach and the application of a questionnaire survey, including both Likert attitudinal questions and qualitative open questions. Phase Two (Population Two) and Phase Three (Population Three) used a qualitative method, by the application of semi-structured interviews. These two data production techniques were undertaken in a sequential multi-phase design to subsequently inform and direct the next phase of data collection and analysis (Green and Thorogood, 2004; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). This is demonstrated in Figure 3.7., outlining the research design below.

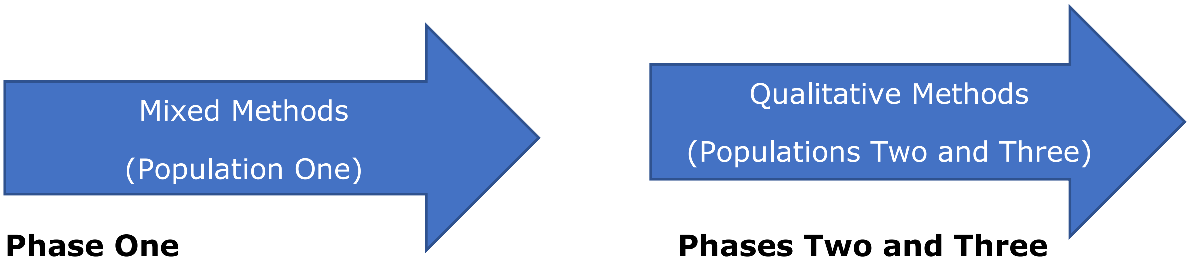

Figure 3.7. Study mixed methods research design

It was intended that this would create a more dynamic approach to the research process, whereby the first phase of the research design would directly shape the second phase of data production and analysis.

The mixed-method design was a convergent design (Creswell, 2015). The purpose of the application of convergent design was to merge the results of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The merging of the datasets provided both quantitative and qualitative perspectives, producing results that included both trends and relationships (Phase One) and in-depth personal perspectives from individuals (Phase Two and Phase Three). The convergent design involved a separate collection of Phase One (quantitative and qualitative) and Phase Two and Phase Three (qualitative) to merge the qualitative and quantitative data analysis.

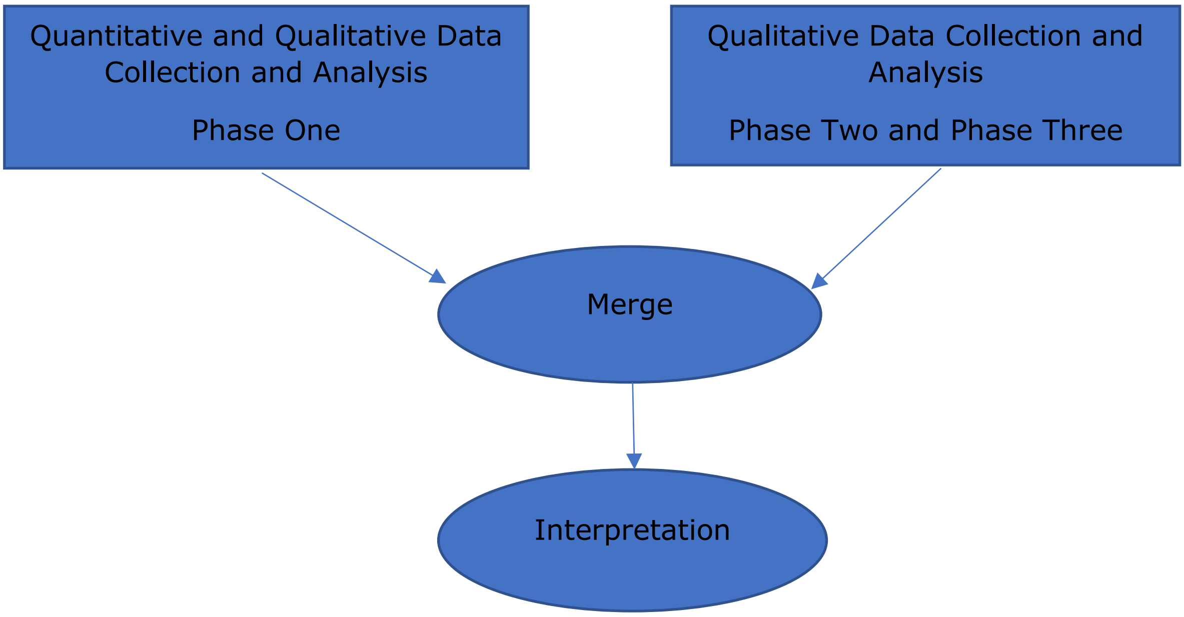
Quantitative and Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis
Phase One
Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis
Phase Two and Phase Three
Merge
Interpretation

Figure 3.8. Mixed-method convergent design Creswell (2015), Adapted by the Researcher 2018.

Analysis for the study followed an inductive approach to theme identification. The Phase One data analysis commenced with an analysis of the quantitative data collected from the Likert responses within the questionnaire survey. The data was put into SPSS and statistical descriptors were produced. The data was analysed and a set of results from the quantitative data set was produced. The responses from the qualitative open questions were input into NVivo. These were analysed using Thematic Analysis.

The semi-structured interviews were transcribed using the intelligent verbatim technique (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011) by the researcher and input into NVivo for analysis. For Phase Two and Phase Three, the semi-structured interviews drew on principles of thematic coding from qualitative research (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Thorpe et al., 2005).

3.8.1. Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a method often used by social science researchers. Boyatzis (1998) defines thematic analysis as a way of seeing and searching for the codable moment, doing so reliably, and interpreting that information and themes in the context of a theory or contextual framework. Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach developed a set of procedures to provide researchers with a flexible yet systematic approach for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns/themes across a dataset. To embed the critical realist philosophy into the analysis, the research took a realistic approach to thematic analysis. The research began by assuming that to have a complete comprehension of the objective world is naïve. Taking a critical realism approach to thematic analysis "makes an important distinction between epistemological assumptions (referring to knowledge) and ontological assumptions (referring to being)" (Wiltshire and Ronkainen, 2021:162). Realism respects the epistemological concept that reality cannot be comprehended in full, as it is processed through our brains, language, culture, methods, and so on (Wong et al., 2013). Similarly, subscribing to the idea that "there is a state of the matter which is what it is, regardless of how we view it, choose to view it or are somehow manipulated into viewing it" (Archer 2007:197). Critical realist research recognises the inherent value in both qualitative and quantitative methods through the idea of 'critical methodological pluralism' (Danermark et al., 2002). It is the basis of selecting both qualitative and quantitative methods within this study. Critical realism values the concept of validity, although it is important to amend it for some aspects of qualitative research (Maxwell, 2012).

The data collection methods and questions were structured around and directly linked to the three distinct research objectives. Therefore, there was both a 'top-down’ approach, exploring the data with the responses to the questions structured around the research objectives, as well as a ‘bottom-up’ approach, to capture information across the data sets used to identify themes and patterns within the data. The ‘top-down’ data explored the data from the perspective of the research objectives. The ‘bottom-up’ data explored the data from the perspective of identifying patterns and themes. Both approaches were applied in combination (see Figure 3.9). Noting critics' views that thematic analysis limited interpretive power, the approach was applied systematically. The analytical approach was embedded within the philosophical approach of Critical Realism to ensure that the coding process was thorough, inclusive, and comprehensive (see Figure 3.9). Themes were not just generated from a few vivid examples in an anecdotal approach.

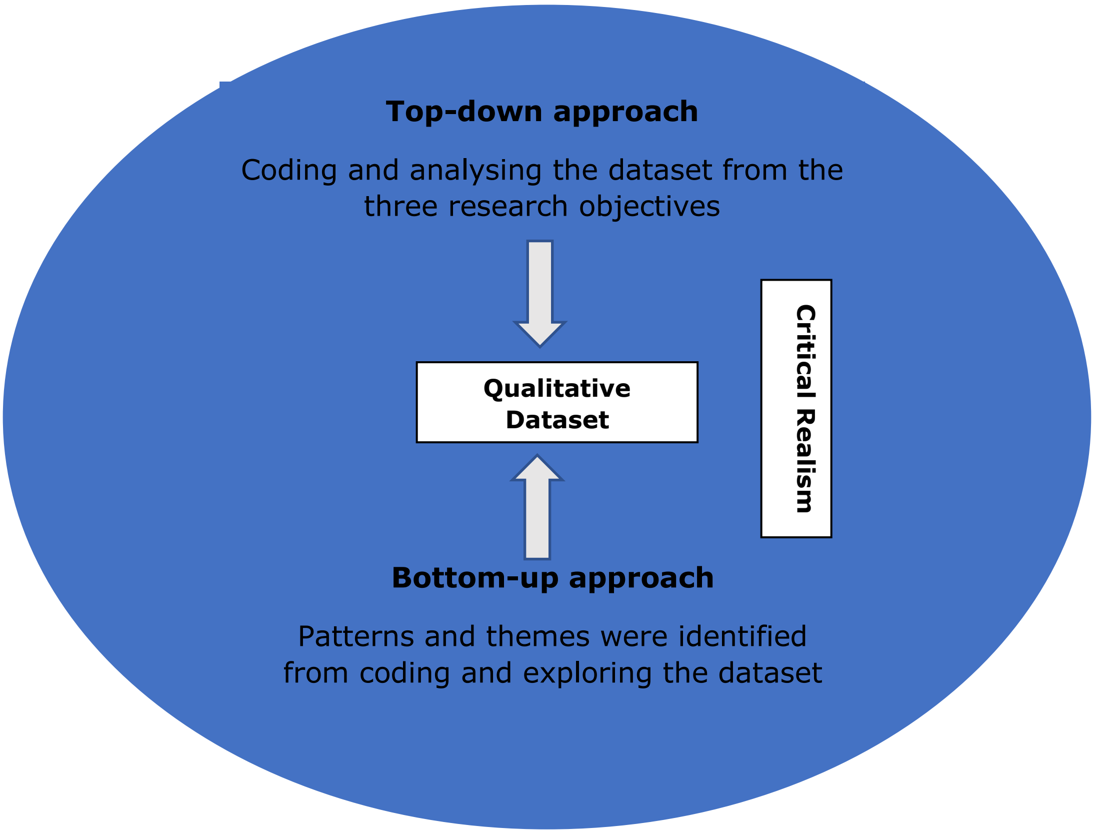
Top-down approach
Coding and analysing the dataset from the three research objectives
Qualitative Dataset
Critical Realism
Bottom-up approach
Patterns and themes were identified from coding and exploring the dataset

Figure 3.9. Thematic Analysis approach design

The six-stage thematic analysis process used by Braun and Clarke (2006) was applied in the study (see Table 3.7. below). Note that these stages are not simply linear, moving from one stage to the next, but rather a recursive process, where one moves back and forth as required throughout the phases. The dataset was analysed using a combination of theoretical and experiential thematical analysis methods (Braun and Clarke, 2013).

Table 3.7. Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) adapted by the Researcher 2019.

Description of the Process	**Phase**	**Study**
Transcribing data, reading and re-reading the data, and noting down initial ideas.	Familiarising yourself with the data:	The Likert Scale responses from the Questionnaire Survey were used to inform the semi-structured interviews. All semi-structured interviews with practitioners and educators were transcribed. Open Questions from the student survey were reviewed and ideas were noted.
Coding interesting features of the data systematically across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.	Generating initial codes:	The transcribed interviews were input into NVivo. The responses from the Open Questions from the questionnaire survey were input into NVivo. All data sources (from the three study populations) were coded, collating data relevant to each code. Codes were structured around both the three research objects and interesting features of the data systematically.
Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.	Searching for themes:	Bringing together the three different study populations. Once this was completed, the quantitative data set was merged with the qualitative data set to define and name themes across the complete dataset.
Checking if the themes work concerning the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.	Reviewing themes:	
Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.	Defining and naming themes:	
The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, the final analysis of selected extracts, relating of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.	Producing the report:	The analysis was written up.

Thematic Analysis was applied in a structured, robust fashion, providing a flexible method that was appropriate to answer the three research objectives and broader theoretical assumptions. In addition, the dataset was mined, with patterns/themes developed, driven by a ‘bottom-up’ approach to exploring broader patterns that cut across all the research objectives.

3.9. Issues of validity and reliability

The validity of the research is evident in the multi-method approach taken and outlined above. The data collection techniques used in the study include documentary research, questionnaire survey data, and interview data. The population of the interviews are extremely knowledgeable about the subject under investigation. The populations used in the research and the data-gathering methods deployed are appropriate to the subject under investigation. As is the case with qualitative research, the concept of testing for reliability is problematic, as this study is very much situated within its context (Silverman, 2017).

This study takes a multi-method approach; the research methodology and application of the research methods are predominantly qualitative with quantitative aspects to ensure and validate the robustness of the datasets. Therefore, the ability to validate the findings by replicating the application of the data collection materials at another point in time, with another group of individuals, would be unlikely to produce the same set of results.

The concept of replication of the study is neither particularly pertinent nor desirable, as the researcher is seeking to explore the research topic, aims, and objectives to produce findings from this particular group of participants, particular geographical locations, and particular student cohorts, at this point in time. The researcher developed a theoretical framework and methodological framework focused on establishing the soundness and dependability of the research study (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Riege, 2003). Within this study, this has been achieved using the quality criterion as developed by Guba and Lincoln (1989) and Lincoln et al. (2011) to test and ensure the quality of the research, as well as using Riege's (2003) eight design tests for quality, validity, and reliability. These eight tests have been particularly designed for use with the case study methodology and can also be applied when using a Critical Realism philosophical perspective. The case study method is about theory construction and building and is based on the need to understand a real-life phenomenon (2003, p. 80). Riege (2003) states that there are four design traditional tests of construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability, and that these should be complemented by four additional design tests of credibility, trustworthiness, confirmability, and dependability to enhance the quality, validity, and reliability of case study research. The combination of the conceptual framework developed from the literature review, the theoretical framework, and the methodological framework have been constructed to address the issues of quality and rigour. It is not the researcher's intention that this study should, or could, be replicated, as the findings from data analysis and the methodological approach ensured that there was a direct and robust connection between context and findings. The application of Critical Realism as a theoretical framework recognises that the data provided through the interviews and surveys by the participants was constructed with their perception of reality and their reflections on how they fit within societal social constructions, in terms of where they fit within the world and what that means to be them, with their experiences and at that point in time.

The research was limited to the higher education institutions that agreed to take part. This set both Population One and Population Three of the study. Due to both creative practitioner mobility and the creative practitioners who agreed to participate in the study, it was not possible to interview creative practitioners (Population Two) who attended the three higher education institutions participating in the study. The research was also limited to the availability of the research participants, including when students (Population One) were on campus.

3.10 Ethics

Before undertaking the research, the researcher completed the necessary ethical approval application process. Ethical approval for the study was granted by the Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences, Birmingham City University. No contact with any potential participants or data collection was undertaken before ethical approval was granted. There are ethical considerations in the conduct of the study, particularly with the participants of the three populations who participated. The participants were made fully aware of the extent of the participation that the research required before they agreed to take part. The individual identities of the participants in the research remained anonymous. The organisations they represent were not identified.

As this was considered by the Research Ethics Committee not to be a high-risk project, nor did it involve vulnerable groups, standard ethical procedures and considerations were followed. These were as follows:

- Participants completed a consent form before the data collection was undertaken.
- Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time, including during the interview, without needing to provide a rationale and the researcher would not question this, nor put any pressure on them to participate.
- The research, interview questions, and survey questions were only pertinent to the aims and objectives of the study. Although it was recognised that some career decisions may have been influenced by participants’ personal lives, the research was conducted in such a way as to reduce the risk of unduly causing participants’ distress.

The participants remained anonymous throughout the study and the following steps were taken to ensure the participants’ anonymity:

- Transcriptions were anonymised using coded identifiers.
- Individual identifiers were kept separate from the transcriptions.

- Transcriptions of interviews are stored securely.
- In line with the Data Protection Act, individuals’ details will not be shared and will be stored only for the period of research.

The data gathered for the research will be held safely and securely. The names of the participants and their organisations will be coded and only the researcher and her supervisors will have access to the codes. A copy of the approval email from the research ethics committee is included in the appendices of this thesis.

3.11 Chapter summary and concluding remarks.

This chapter provided a rationale and justification for the theoretical and methodological position taken by the researcher. This included a justification for the data collection techniques applied in the conduct of this study. An overview and rationale for the choice and selection of the populations who participated in this study and a justification for their selection were included. This study has used a multi-method, albeit predominantly qualitative, approach to understand and evaluate how creative discipline education shapes entrepreneurial outcomes within the creative industries (of architecture and photography) from a gender perspective. To address this position, the researcher needed to explore and understand both the context and the factors that contribute to career decision-making by practitioners working within these two industries.

The study provided an analytical framework and robust discussion of the reported views and experiences of the participants. The findings are based on the participants' reflections, expectations, and narratives. Therefore, it could be argued that this is based on their interpretation of the events and interactions experienced from their perspective, which is subjective. Within the methodological approach, the use of a Critical Realism theory framework considered the need to take account of these complexities (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016) and recognise the potential subjectivity. Above all, this study sought to recognise the need for human beings to create meaning in their interactions with others, their place and role in society, and what shapes and influences this and the world around them. Therefore, the study collated data that was meaningful to the research participants when exploring this phenomenon. The use of a multi-method approach and multi-methods with the three different groups of research participants in different locations counteracted some of this subjectivity. The use of a thematic analysis approach applied to the data analysis was also designed to counterbalance some of this subjectivity. By using these methodological and philosophical approaches, the data was able to be triangulated to ensure validity and reliability in the research findings. This included a range of different data collection methods, three different study populations, a critical realist theoretical framework, and a thematic analysis method in the data analysis. This combination of methodological approaches supported the understanding of what was happening within this complex study.

Chapter Four: Early career journeys from childhood into higher education and the formation of an emergent creative identity

4.1. Introduction to the chapter

This is the first of three discussion and findings chapters. This chapter examines participants' career journeys from childhood into higher education. Chapter 5 discusses factors that support entrepreneurial formation and concepts of creative identity. Chapter 6 explores the role of educators in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes and how they influence student concepts of creative identity.

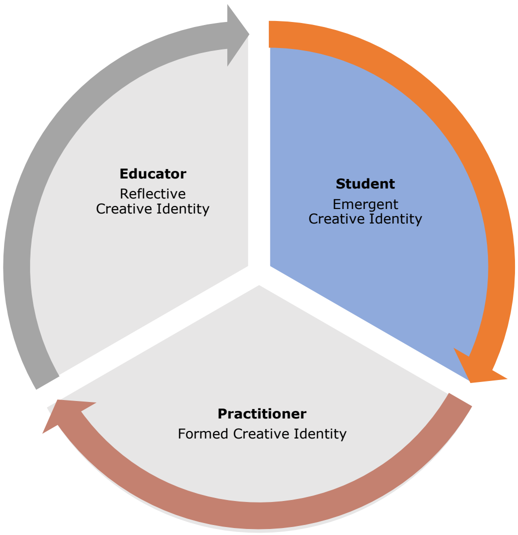

Figure 4.1. Domains of the creative career journey and formation of emergent creative identity.

This chapter is focused on the participants' journeys from childhood into higher education and the factors that influenced their decision to forge a career in the creative industries. Section 4.2 explores childhood influences towards being a creative entrepreneur in adulthood. Section 4.3 discusses the development of an emergent creative identity. In Section 4.4, the role of higher education in supporting the transition towards being a creative entrepreneur is explored. Section 4.5 examines a gender perspective in developing a creative career and developing a creative identity. Section 4.6 examines early career influences – mentors and role models.

4.2. On the road to a creative career: childhood influences towards being a creative entrepreneur in adulthood

This section examines the influence of childhood experiences on the participants' early career thoughts, decisions, and actions. To identify the factors that shaped the intention to have a career in the creative industries, participants were asked questions about when (at what age) and how they set about finding information to pursue a career option in becoming either an architect or a photographer. Data results suggested early life, e.g. childhood environment, had a profound influence on notions of self-identity. Erikson (1968) proposed that childhood is the time when the sense of identity is based on "I am what I learn to make work" (1968: 127), and the findings from the data reflect this statement. There are some indirect signs identified that demonstrate that people's career choices can be associated with their childhood family climate and economic conditions (Schröder, Schmitt-Rodermund, and Arnaud, 2011; Tang, Fouad, and Smith, 1999; Zellweger, Sieger, and Halter, 2011). The role of childhood family climate is discussed briefly in this section, although the results of the study are less definitive on the impact of career choice. Zellweger et al. (2011) suggest that people who have positive childhood experiences feel more confident in coping with career challenges in their adulthood. They are more likely to have the confidence to deal with challenges and a willingness to sacrifice job security for a career that comprises elements of uncertainty and risk. Therefore, they are better able to take on risks in their career pursuits (Whiston and Keller, 2004). Thereby, they are more likely to undertake a career that has elements of risk and exhibit entrepreneurial behaviours and entrepreneurial intentions. The early life experiences were identified within the dataset by identifying frequency data within the fourteen semi-structured interview transcripts with Population Two, the creative practitioners (see Table 4.1 below).

Table 4.1. List of population two research participants

Code	Creative Industry	Location	Gender	Brief Bio	Pseudonym
01FP1	Photography	East Midlands	Female	1-4 years freelance. One year in other roles before setting up practice.	Amy
02FP2	Photography	East Midlands	Female	5-10 years freelance. Over ten years in other roles prior. Mature student.	Beatrice
03FP3	Photography	East Midlands	Female	15-20 years freelance. Over five years in other roles before graduation.	Claire
04FA1	Architecture	East Midlands	Female	Over 25 years in practice. Not freelance.	Amanda
05MA2	Architecture	East Midlands	Male	Over 10 years in practice. Not freelance.	Bertie
06FP4	Photography	West Midlands	Female	5-10 years freelance. Over 20 years in other roles. Mature student.	Deborah
07MA3	Architecture	East Midlands	Male	1-4 years freelance. Five to ten years in practice before going freelance.	Clive
08FA4	Architecture	North West	Female	5-10 years freelance. 15 to 20 years in practice before going freelance.	Donna
09FP5	Photography	South West	Female	1-4 years freelance following graduation.	Elsa
10MP6	Photography	South West	Male	15-20 years freelance. Worked in another creative industry freelance for over 20 years to date before photography.	Derek
11MP7	Photography	West Midlands	Male	5-10 years freelance following graduation.	Edmund
12FA5	Architecture	East Midlands	Female	15-20 years freelance. 1-4 years in practice before going freelance.	Elspeth
13MA6	Architecture	West Midlands	Male	5-10 years freelance. 20-25 years in practice before going freelance.	Frank
14MA7	Architecture	East Midlands	Male	2-4 years freelance. 25-30 years in practice before going freelance.	Gerald

All Population Two participants have degrees that are directly related to their creative profession. All architect practitioners who participated in this study had chartered status and therefore were required to undertake Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3 of their professional qualifications, alongside undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in architecture. By contrast, the photographers are not required to take a particular discipline, or indeed any higher education pathway, to pursue their chosen career. It should be noted that all the photographers participating in this study hold degrees in either photography or the visual arts.

4.2.1. Parental support and concerns - the influence of family

The participants discussed how their family influenced their chosen career choices, directly, indirectly, or inadvertently. During childhood, family members helped shape the participants' view of the world and what options were open to them in their future careers. An example of how family members provided support and creative role models is provided in the extract from a transcript with a photographer below:

> It [photography] was always a hobby, my Mum is quite arty, she went to the Royal College of Art, my Grandad used to buy old cameras from auctions and fix them up. My older cousin was doing a fashion degree, and she needed some fashion photos of clothes that she had made, that was how I properly got into it. (Elsa)

Elsa’s narrative is structured through the lens of her family as ‘creatives’ and supportive of creative activity. This concept of having a role model and someone who shares attributes with oneself is also noted, as this female photographer highlights the significance of the role some family members played in shaping her career choice. This extract provides some context on how the participant’s sense of creative identity began to be shaped during childhood.

Bloomgarden (1977) used the term ‘creative identity’ to define how a person identifies their self-image and organises their experience of creativity. Family members providing a model of creative role identity may influence the motivation for creative behaviour (Petkus Jr, 1996). During the interview, Elsa clearly articulated herself as a ‘creative’ and made references to her ‘creative identity’, which she described as being an integral part of her self-image and sense of personal identity. This suggests a cyclical relationship in how creative identity is formed within family groups and between family members.

In terms of the male participants, there are also family members shaping their early career choices:

> I was about twelve, so quite young. I remember telling my Dad that I wanted to be an architect and he said it was quite hard work, and that it might not be a great idea. As often the way with kids, that didn't dissuade me. It was the only thing I thought I would do with any certainty, being an architect. I hadn't considered any other vocations. (Frank)

The above extract demonstrates a personality trait of self-belief and perseverance in pursuing his chosen career. These are both personality traits identified as entrepreneurial (Scarborough and Cornwall, 2018). Therefore, the role of the family in early career choices, whilst it may be an influence, does not always mean that the participants followed a close family member's advice, no matter how well-intended the advice was given.

In another extract from a female architect, her mother dissuaded her from studying art:

> That's why I had the application to do an art foundation degree as well as the application to study to become an architect. My mother was very worried about me doing an art foundation course, she was very worried I'd never earn enough money to keep myself if I became an artist. (Amanda)

The above extract indicates parental concerns over money and potential income and the importance placed upon their children to have a financially self-sufficient future. After all, the option for family members to financially support their children is only available to those who have the financial means to do so (Becker, 2019). Supporting offspring through years of training or working for free is simply not an option for parents/careers with limited financial resources. In the interview with Amanda, she explained that the reason her mother was so concerned about potential future earnings was because of not being in a financial position to support her. The wider point is that arguably, there is a link between the financial situation of the family and the options available to children as a career choice. There are some families who do not have the financial means to support their children if they are not earning or not earning enough money to 'keep themselves', meaning that some careers are simply not available as a viable option. This situation reinforces the status quo in that children from wealthier families have a wider range of career options available to them compared to children from families whose financial situations are more challenging. The possible link between parental financial situations and children's career options illustrates how class and wealth structures within society constrain and enable career options and social mobility. Going back to the case of Amanda, she explained in the interview that her mother's concerns about her studying art and becoming an artist were solely financial ones. The social structures within society have the causal powers to impact people's decisions and career choices from childhood, thereby limiting or enabling, depending on the causal powers, the real choices available. Bhaskar (1989) argues that it is an understanding of these social structures that enables us to truly comprehend our place in the world. Furthermore, individuals develop a sophisticated understanding of these structures over time; thereby, the transition from childhood to adulthood supports this sophisticated understanding. The participants are reflecting on their childhood through a more sophisticated understanding of the social structures within their environment.

Bourdieu (1993) suggests there is a wider perception that art and design courses are associated with the cultural elite and only available to those who can decipher the socially constructed meanings and codes. Therefore, it could be suggested that many young people take the view that creative discipline subjects are not for them. Young people are also more likely to choose subjects and universities where they feel they will 'fit in' (Reay, David, and Ball, 2005). The concept of fitting in also supports notions of self and refashioning of the concept of their self and identity. Clark and Zimmerman found that most artistically talented students' family members encouraged them into the arts (1988). Taylor and Littleton (2008b) found that some parents expressed concerns that art is not a 'proper subject' to study at A-level and therefore discouraged their children from studying it beyond the post-compulsory level. Therefore, young people can face a potential lack of parental support concerning their choice of studying creative subjects due to negative perceptions about it not leading to 'proper work'. This notion of 'proper work' includes work that has an immediate financial remuneration.

The influence of family members is key at this point in young people’s lives. In most cases, they are living with their parent(s), and there is a traditional role for parents to support and nurture their children in all aspects of their development, including career and post-compulsory education choices. There is a complex picture here, as the extent and shape of that influence are dependent upon a range of factors, including whether this concurred with their wishes and the extent to which they considered that this advice resonated with their interests and ambitions.

4.2.2. School influence and careers advice

The participants discussed how their school experiences informed their career plans. Many expressed the opinion that school and college did not always provide them with suitable career advice or did not have timetables set up to allow students to study both art and sciences at A-level. Being able to take both science and art/design subjects is crucial for young people to get the combination of science and art/design A-levels required for most architecture courses’ entry-level requirements for higher education. The assumption is that young people follow either one route or the other in terms of their A-level subject choices, so take either arts and humanities subjects or science subjects, but not a combination of both.

> You had to go to the tertiary colleges and none of them could do science and art. They said, ‘no, we can’t timetable that’. I ended up going to [name of place outside his geographical area], there were me and three others who ended up going there because we wanted to do Maths, Physics, and Art and it was the only place that could do it. (Frank)

Besides the logistical problems of finding an educational establishment that enabled students to study both arts and science subjects at A-level, participants were also critical of the career advice received at school.

> I remember having career advice at school. I remember having a chat at school about A-level choices and they were quite clear, maths, physics, not a creative subject interestingly. They were very clear on maths which I would have chosen anyway, not too enamoured on physics. The other one they advised was economics. If I had my time again, I would have done a creative one. (Gerald)

In Gerald's reflective reassessment of his career choices within the architecture industry, he demonstrates an enhanced awareness of the industry's structure, culture, and the essential skill sets for success. This self-evaluation highlights the importance of industry knowledge in navigating a career path effectively.

Some participants, like Bertie, exhibited a clear understanding of their career path within the architecture industry from an early age. Bertie's confidence and vision are evident in his statement, "When it came around to discussing stuff with a career's advisor, I was fairly certain as to what I wanted to do. Most of them didn't have any idea about how you went about it." This narrative emphasises the significance of individuals' early convictions and reflections on their past choices, affirming their current beliefs (Erikson, 1968).

Donna's experience with career advice further underscores the impact of gender perceptions on career decisions. Donna shares that her career advisor suggested teaching or engineering, but upon considering an engineering course, she noticed the lack of female representation. Applying the lens of Social Constructivism illuminates how institutions, in this example, higher education institutions (HEIs), contribute to the construction of gender norms (Butler, 1993). The construction of gendered norms here, which are portrayed as 'male subjects', underscores the role of discourse in shaping and reinforcing gendered identities, thereby influencing individuals', in this case, Donna's, perception of themselves. Donna's decision not to pursue an engineering degree due to the lack of female representation by the HEIs plays a role in perpetuating traditional gender norms (Goffman, 1979; Messner, 1993). Donna's decision not to pursue engineering aligns with findings from Reay, David, and Ball’s study (2005), which revealed that students choose disciplines and universities where they feel they will 'fit in.' The historical perception of STEM subjects being male-oriented influenced such decisions, as documented in various studies (Codiroli Mcmaster, 2017; Ertl, Luttenberger, and Paechter, 2017; Luttenberger, Paechter, and Ertl, 2019; Smith, 2011; Sobieraj and Krämer, 2019; Tay, Salazar, and Lee, 2018).

Donna's experience reflects the concept of 'fitting in,' a significant factor deterring female students from pursuing subjects perceived as male dominated. This phenomenon reinforces existing gender norms, contributing to the persistence of male dominance in certain academic disciplines and subsequent careers.

Career decision-making is a multifaceted process influenced by various factors, including personal reflections, societal perceptions, and guidance from career advisors. This is important, as it demonstrates how gender can influence and shape career aspirations and career choices even in childhood, thereby positing how gender roles are the product of societal norms, expectations, and power dynamics (Connell, 1987).

Reassessing Career Choices:

Gerald's journey of reassessing career choices underscores the dynamic nature of career paths. His evaluation, informed by industry knowledge, reflects a continual process of reflection and adaptation. This narrative emphasises the importance of understanding the structure and culture within an industry, a perspective aligned with Critical Realism, as individuals like Gerald become more aware of the contextual factors shaping their careers and shaping entrepreneurial behaviours (Archer, 1995).

Confidence, Clarity, and Career Guidance:

Bertie's confidence and clarity regarding his career path highlight the significance of early guidance. However, Donna's experience reveals a common challenge -

inadequate guidance from career advisors. This echoes Critical Realism's emphasis on understanding the underlying structures and uncovering causal mechanisms that shape individual decisions (Keat and Urry, 1975). The lack of guidance may contribute to individuals making choices based on societal perceptions rather than informed considerations (Connell, 2002).

Gender Theory and Social Construction:

It could be argued that Donna's decision not to pursue engineering due to a lack of female representation aligns with the premise that gender is socially constructed. Gender norms and expectations influence individuals' perceptions of suitable career paths (Goffman, 1979; Messner, 1993). This resonates with research findings that students often choose disciplines where they feel they will 'fit in,' reflecting the social construction of gender roles (Reay, David, and Ball, 2005).

Intersectionality and Institutional Barriers:

Intersectionality considers how various social categories intersect to shape experiences. While Donna's narrative focuses on gender, intersectionality suggests that other factors may influence career choices (Cho et al., 2013). Institutional barriers, as seen in the lack of women in engineering courses, highlight how norms and practices can discourage or exclude individuals based on gender.

Power Dynamics and 'Fitting In':

The gendered perception of 'fitting in' is a significant theme in deterring female students from STEM fields. The exploration of power dynamics is important, where the lack of female representation reinforces existing power structures contributing to the perpetuation of gender stereotypes and is a product of societal norms, expectations, and power dynamics (Connell, 1987; Rowbotham, 1992). Donna's choice to enter architecture despite a low ratio of female students challenges traditional norms, showcasing the potential for reflective agency in dismantling gender stereotypes.

Changing Gender Norms and Reflective Agency:

Donna's success in architecture, despite historical gender imbalances, hints at changing gender norms. Donna's story reflects the transformative potential of reflective agency, contributing to a more inclusive and diverse representation in traditionally male-dominated fields, thereby exercising agency in entrepreneurial decision-making (Fletcher, 2012).

It would appear good career advice and students seeing people like themselves (in this example, the same gender) represented within course literature and at open days helps support their choice of discipline. Jarvis noted that the provision of careers and vocational guidance potentially plays an important role in influencing occupational expectations and hence guiding the transition from school to employment (1994). This notion was echoed by the participants. Despite the provision of career and vocational guidance playing an important role in guiding the transition from school to work, some of the participants found that the advice they received from school career advisors was sometimes lacking in quality. One of the participants, Clive, recounted that he felt there was little career assistance at school, and that which he did receive, he thought was dreadful. Clive found he had more helpful career guidance from his father, and it was his influence that shaped his career choice.

> … who said you are into Lego you like art you've always liked DT, maths, and physics, so you are a bit of a balanced guy. Engineering you could go down, but you like your art, you like your creativity, architecture sounds quite good, doesn't it? I thought yeah, I'll give it a go. (Clive)

The role of family and school as an integral part of young people's lives shapes and influences young people's career expectations and guides the transition from school to employment. It is also noted that keen students will travel some distance and find out information for themselves to study the subjects at A-level that will increase their future chances of securing a university place to study their chosen discipline, in this case, architecture. This could demonstrate a level of determination and resilience in pursuing their chosen creative career.

4.2.3. Summary of the discussion on childhood influences towards being a creative entrepreneur in adulthood

The overarching theme throughout these interviews is the determination and resilience on behalf of the participants to pursue their chosen careers and how family influences career decisions. This may be evidenced by studies that suggest that gender and personality traits interact to influence occupational choice later in life (Woods and Hampson, 2010). Career advice for young people is often limited to family members and school staff. This narrow field of exposure to potential career opportunities does not necessarily limit either their drive or ambition. This ambition is not dimmed, even when they face hurdles such as limited career advice and problems with the timetabling of their chosen A-level subjects. This suggests they are exhibiting entrepreneurial characteristics, defined by Scarborough and Cornwall (2018) as being *self-reliant,* given that they are willing to source education and career information themselves and are not reliant on career advisors or family members. Their determination to pursue their chosen career, despite hindrances such as subject timetabling and reservations from family members, demonstrates both *perseverance* and *confidence in their ability to succeed.*

There is a range of factors that may determine career choice, such as the human capital approach (Brown, Ortiz-Nunez, and Taylor, 2011), where individuals evaluate perceived benefits, such as potential earnings, against perceived costs, such as training costs. Gender and personality traits (Woods and Hampson, 2010) can come into play, where there is a perception of fit between work environment and interests. Social capital and personal values (Fearon et al., 2018) are also at work, where individuals seek careers which they feel reflect their values and belief of social capital. Besides social capital, there are also issues for consideration such as gender and social class, which may shape reflections of self-identity and influence career identity. The participants demonstrated personal traits and behaviours such as being determined and having a clear *future orientation* towards their goal of being successful in their future careers. Even at an early age, creative entrepreneurs were exhibiting entrepreneurial behaviours such as being prepared to take on a career pathway that had elements of risk. They chose a career pathway that had elements of risk, exhibited entrepreneurial behaviours and entrepreneurial intentions, and succeeded in following this by demonstrating a clear vision and clarity of purpose.

Findings indicate that parental concerns over future earning potentially influence children's choice of degree subject and subsequent career. The concept of 'fitting in' also influences children's choices of degree and career choices. Factors such as seeing people like themselves in course brochures and other publicity material influence children's selection of degree courses. The concept of fitting in also relates to gender. If females feel that the degree course 'is not for them' as there is a high proportion of males in the discipline, this may deter them from selecting certain degree courses. All these factors maintain the status quo and societal hierarchies around class, gender, ethnicity, and financial wealth. The masculinisation of certain degree courses echoes the study by Jones which identified the gendered nature of the language used in course descriptors (2015). Factors such as the images selected for course brochures and other publicity material and the gendered nature of the language used in course descriptors all play a part in making people with attributes that do not fit the 'norm' feel excluded and deter them from applying. Prospective students may feel the lack of representation of people who share their attributes means that this is not the course for them. These subtle factors, whether intended or not, arguably contribute to the structural barriers in place, leading to the status quo being maintained and the masculine hierarchy remaining intact.

4.3. On the road to a creative career: development of emergent creative identity

This study takes the position that creative identity is largely anchored in the field of social cognition and differential psychology. This approach accounts for how the concept of a 'creative identity' is viewed as a subdomain of the self and identity (Barbot and Heuser, 2017). The seminal theorist on identity development, Erickson (1963; 1968; 1980), identified developmental stages. Whilst Erikson did not specifically discuss the concept of creative identity, he, along with other authors, has recognised that adolescence is marked as a period in one's life of immense change, biologically, cognitively psychologically and that these changes impact the development of one's identity, including one's concept of a creative identity (Barbot and Heuser, 2017; Borghuis et al*.*, 2017; Dollinger and Dollinger, 2017; Klimstra et al., 2009; Kroger, Martinussen, and Marcia, 2009; Rostan, 1998; Steinberg, 2008; Steinberg, 2009).

4.3.1. Factors that shape the development of emergent creative identity

The findings of this study concur with Albert (1990), in that the participants reported that they were drawn to a creative career due to being interested, being perceived to have talent in artistic subjects at school, such as art and design, as well as having artistic hobbies, such as painting, drawing, model making, and photography. Having perceived talent in these creative activities encouraged the participants to pursue a career in the creative industries. Their creative hobbies underpinned their desire for a creative career, forged their concept of themselves as creative people, and helped them to internalise an emergent creative identity. Engaging in creative activities from a young age and receiving recognition for their creative outputs contributed to the emergence of their creative identity. This sense of being a creative person underlined their desire, taking it from an interest and a hobby to actively seeking a creative career. It is outside of the scope of this study to identify those who did not go on to pursue these careers. It would appear from the data that several behavioural attributes and attitudes indicate the reasons that their ambitions to be creative practitioners came to fruition. These are highlighted in the figure below.

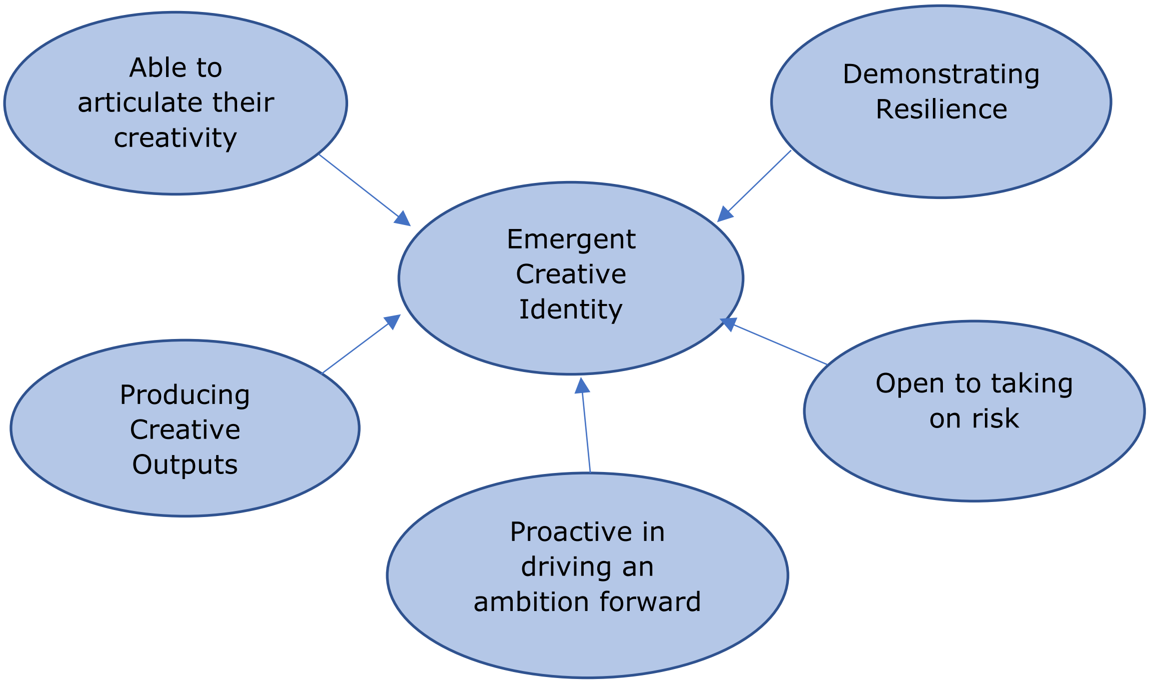
Able to articulate their creativity
Demonstrating Resilience
Emergent Creative Identity
Producing Creative Outputs
Open to taking on risk
Proactive in driving an ambition forward

Figure 4.2 Behavioural attributes and attitudes that shape emergent creative identity.

These themes were identified following thematic analysis and achieving data saturation when exploring the narratives of population two, the creative practitioners. These were categorised into the themes identified in Figure 4.2 above. Each of these behavioural attributes and attitudes will be discussed in turn.

First, **demonstrating resilience**: The participants were clear from an early age that they wanted to pursue a creative career in their chosen field. Many of them actively sought out the options and logistics to go to university to study a creative subject. They were often up against family concerns, as discussed above in Section 4.21, and had to overcome school/college A-level subject timetabling issues, as discussed in Section 4.22. They knowingly chose a career that involved a very long period of training and working long hours to achieve their qualified status, as is the case for architects. In the case of the photographers, they chose a career in which they knew from the outset they would most likely need to work freelance and thereby lack any traditionally employed job security and benefits.

Second, **open to taking on risk**: Working in the creative industries is frequently on a freelance basis and completely reliant on securing projects, often through networking. Even working in an architecture practice, there is a drive to secure the awarding of contracts for projects. The security of having an annual salary and benefits such as sick and holiday pay are missing for freelance creatives. This openness to take on risk manifests itself in other ways, such as willingness to take on a long period of training with no guarantee of employment at the end of it, which is the case for architects. For photographers, there is uncertainty about the future of the industry, with changes to technology and the increase in smartphone usage meaning more people are inclined to take their own photographs and therefore may be less inclined to pay a professional photographer.

Third, **being proactive in driving an ambition forward**: As discussed in Sections 4.21 and 4.22, the participants met with setbacks and resistance in their quest to go to university to study (either architecture or photography). They needed to be proactive in finding information and operationalising their ambitions to secure their future. There is no blueprint on how these careers can be successful, due to technological and socio-economic factors. There is no such thing as a typical photography career journey, as each individual is different depending upon the period and field they chose to specialise in. In addition, architecture is a highly competitive industry and early career training opportunities within firms are highly sought after.

Fourth, **the need to produce creative outputs**: The participants discussed their concept of being creative by actually producing creative outputs. They explained that they needed to articulate their creativity by being creative, and for them, this resulted in a desire to produce creative outputs. They did not consider anyone who is not producing creating outputs to be a creative person, i.e., someone who only desires to be creative but is not following this up. An example of this was one of the practitioners, Clive, describing someone "…[laughs], because he's not an architect, he's a wannabe." A key component of producing creative outputs is ensuring there is a commercial aspect to their work. The participants described the tension with ensuring their creative outputs have the monetary value placed upon them which recognises their skill and professionalism. This concept of the commercial value of their creative outputs was a theme found within the analysis of the data. The commercial value of their creative outputs was deemed to be a core component of what made them creative professionals. Without the commercial aspect, the creative endeavour could simply be described as a hobby. This concept of creative outputs having commercial value could also be linked back to their sense of self, as Beatrice states: "…. you've got to have the self-worth of thinking, 'I can do better than that and I'm a professional'." In the above extract, Beatrice discusses having the 'self-worth' to charge the appropriate fee for her creative outputs. This indicates that she perceives a correlation between having personal self-worth and charging a professional fee for her creative outputs.

Fifth, the **ability to articulate their creative identity**: Litterton and Miell (2004) identified the importance of what they described as novice creatives taking on this new identity, for example, as an artist. For the participants, this is prevalent even at the time of being interviewed, which could be many decades after they graduated. The concept of having a creative identity is very much embedded in the concept of themselves and who they are. As Elsa succinctly stated: "Yes, it is so much part of my identity." This in turn gives them a sense of meaning as to who they are, which in turn directly links to their creative actions and forms a link between creative outputs and creative self. As Frank stated: "It's [creative identity] part of my identity. There are personality traits like being conscientious for example. If you took it away, I'm not sure what you'd replace it with really." This indicates that he feels it's so much part of who he is in the concept of self and identity that it would leave a void that would need to be replaced with something that he could not name. The concept of creative identity as an integral part of one's concept of self is echoed in the literature by Storr (1972). Storr described the artist as someone whose creative endeavours are driven by a quest for identity.

The above picture paints a range of complex factors that help shape creative identity, particularly those related to attitude to risk and resilience. It is this combination of factors that helps shape and drive the participants to transition from student towards being a creative practitioner as they navigate their career journey within the creative industries.

4.4. The role of higher education in supporting the transition to becoming a creative entrepreneur

The next section of this chapter examines the role of higher education in supporting the transition to becoming a creative practitioner. This section will focus on data from Population One, the questionnaire survey with the student participants, and data from the other two population groups, where applicable. This section concludes with an examination of students' responses to questions on how their degree programme prepared them for work in their chosen creative sector.

4.4.1. Higher Education creative discipline assessment techniques mirroring client/practitioner relationships

The study highlights the distinctive nature of coursework in creative disciplines, particularly in its project-based, time-driven, and real-life project grounding, as noted by Rae (2004). Coursework is not only formally assessed by staff but also subject to informal critique by peers, a process mirrored to some extent in the client/practitioner relationship (Carey and Naudin, 2006b; Carey and Matlay, 2010; Carey and Matlay, 2007; Penaluna and Penaluna, 2009). The prevalence of showcasing students' work, indicated by the overwhelming majority agreeing or strongly agreeing to the opportunity to present or showcase their work to peers, academics, or practitioners, suggests the centrality of presentation and display in the learning process.

When asked the question, *Have there been opportunities to present or showcase my work to my peers and/or others?,* only one student disagreed. This highlights the prevalence of showcasing students' work to others, either peers and/or academics or practitioners. Sixty-six participants strongly agreed and twenty-two agreed with the statement. The creative practitioners, study Population Two, were also asked questions relating to their university experience and the use of assessment techniques. Perhaps more importantly, they were also asked whether these assessment situations helped prepare them for future client relationships. Their reflections as to whether the assessment types were indeed a positive experience were mixed. In particular, the use of critical reviews, or 'crits' as they are commonly known, led to the participants recollecting very negative experiences, as per the following example extract: "Crits are hideous. Yeah, I found them really, really hard and presentation-wise I'm not really a loud someone who stands up and…[laughs] well I might be now, but I wasn't then." (Donna)

All the architecture practitioner participants were critical of their higher education experience, suggesting that more could have been done to support and prepare students for critical reviews. They all felt that it was unnecessarily more aggressive in terms of approach and language used than it needed to be. It should be noted that nearly all architecture tutors were male. They noted that they were not given any practical advice on presentation skills or how to articulate their ideas. In the interview, Bernie reflected on his experiences of undertaking critical reviews as a student: "It is definitely a skill, but I don't think it is something that is taught in terms of giving tips. It is a case of making you do it again, again and again. Either get good at it or get broken by it and go off and do something else." Bernie's reflections illustrate negative connotations at the memory of having to do critical reviews, particularly for the architects. The underlying theme here is that you either had to be good at them, become good at them, or leave the university degree programme. It would seem that very little guidance, hints, and tips were given in terms of how to present one's ideas and how to develop good presentation skills. It is noted that this type of assessment, critical reviews, particularly adversely impacted students who were unable to perform under pressure, nor did it particularly meet the needs of students who were unable in these situations to be particularly adversary in character. When Gerald was asked if having to present and defend his ideas to an audience at university helped at all when presenting to clients, his response was:

> No, no, only in as much as you develop a thicker skin. I remember early on maybe in my first year in practice doing a design and presenting it to a

> client and at the end they gave a little round of applause and I'd never seen that before and never felt this warmth. It was a very aggressive place I think the [institution name]. I've seen many of my fellow students just in tears at the end of a 'crit' and so on. It was a pretty brutal place, and we might come on to the gender thing, it was a very male way of doing it really whilst some of the females were robust enough to deal with it and males who found it intimidating, all but one of the tutors were male, I found it was aggressive at the time, the broad feeling was that you were terrified standing up and presenting your scheme. It was scary. You'd always do that when you'd barely had any sleep and so on. (Gerald)

With regards to 'developing a thick skin', it could be suggested that this could be a good trait for those pursuing self-employment/entrepreneurship (Leutner et al., 2014). Historically, the culture of higher education has been underpinned by male dominance of lecturing staff, even up to the late 90s (Bagilhole, 2002; Cooper, 2019; Grove, 2013). Elspeth, in her interview, referred to the fact when she was a guest lecturer in an architecture department at a traditional research-led university as recently as five years ago, there were very few female academic staff.

However, the experiences of creative practitioner participants, particularly in architecture, raise important questions about the effectiveness and implications of assessment techniques, especially critical reviews or 'crits.' The practitioners' reflections reveal a mixed sentiment about the impact of these critiques on their university experience and their subsequent preparedness for future client relationships. The negative recollections and perceptions surrounding 'crits,' as exemplified by Donna's statement, point to a potential disconnect between the educational approach and the needs of students. Architecture practitioners unanimously expressed dissatisfaction with the aggressive nature of critical reviews, underscoring the need for better support and preparation for students in facing such assessments.

The gendered aspect of this dissatisfaction becomes apparent when considering the predominantly male architecture tutors. Bernie's reflection on critical reviews as a skill that is acquired through repeated exposure, without formal guidance or practical advice, suggests a system that may disproportionately benefit individuals who conform to a more adversarial presentation style. The underlying theme of 'become good at it or leave' raises concerns about inclusivity and whether students, especially those who may not thrive under such pressure or conform to an aggressive demeanour, are being adequately supported.

Gerald's reflection on the impact of 'crits' in developing a thicker skin raises questions about the unintended consequences of such assessment methods. While the development of resilience can be viewed as a positive outcome, the aggressive and intimidating nature of these critiques, coupled with a predominantly male teaching staff, suggests a potential gendered dimension. The notion that some female students were robust enough to deal with it, while some males found it intimidating, points to a gendered cultural dynamic within the architectural education environment. The historical male dominance of lecturing staff in higher education, as mentioned by Elspeth, reflects broader gender imbalances. The potential impact of a male-centric teaching staff on the aggressive and intimidating nature of 'crits' adds another layer to the discussion. The study not only sheds light on the unique assessment techniques in creative disciplines but also underscores the need for a critical examination of these practices. The gendered aspect of dissatisfaction with assessment methods, especially in architecture, calls for a re-evaluation of teaching practices to ensure inclusivity and equitable support for all students, regardless of gender or presentation style.

This assessment type has changed in universities, as now they are no longer called ‘crits’, but reviews, and the approach and language used are determined to be more evaluative in providing constructive feedback and shaping the students' work in terms of challenging them in ways to progress. The language used and the approach as a determining factor in shaping student experience was a view that was echoed by Amanda in her account, both during her time as an undergraduate at university and, more recently, supporting students who are on placement in her architecture firm:

> Most young architects find that [presenting ideas in critical review] difficult and I think most young girls find that particularly difficult. I think they find that really painful. I think they find that… [pause] I think at the time tutors' language wasn't particularly good. I think there are ways of discussing design with students which is more positive so that enables them to bring out what they are trying to achieve. (Amanda)

Amanda studied over twenty-five years ago and is now involved in supporting students on placement in her practice; therefore, she is in a position to reflect on how the situation has changed. All four university educators who participated in the study, particularly the two architecture educators, discussed in strong terms that the use of 'crits' in that traditional combative format no longer has a place in current education practice. Indeed, the practitioners who participated in the study who graduated in more recent years did not have the same largely negative experience to recollect. One of the photographers commented that whilst she found showcasing her work and receiving feedback as a student 'daunting', it would be an experience she would enjoy now (as a professional photographer), as it would provide an opportunity for reflection, assessment, and improvement to her work.

The results from the student survey show a high count of both architecture and photography students responding with either strongly agree or agree with the following statement: *The degree programme assessment techniques have helped me for real-life situations that I may encounter in a working environment.* This indicates that they were able to identify a connection between the assessment techniques used within their university degree program and real-life situations they may encounter in the future in a working environment. All the students who contributed to the survey are assessed by a mix of portfolios, reviews of their work, and opportunities to showcase their work in open events within their university. At these shows, they have an opportunity to discuss their work and ideas with their peers, university staff, creative practitioners, and others. This experience enables them to display their work to potential employers, as well as test out responses to their work and ideas to a much wider audience.

Utilising Fleetwood's (2005) stratified perspective, the study draws on participants' retrospective accounts of their experiences during university 'crits,' captured through interviews, forming a crucial empirical component. Exploring events at the actual level reveals dynamics during these encounters, while delving deeper into the real level uncovers generative mechanisms or causal powers underlying outcomes. These mechanisms are linked to the hierarchical structure within universities, where staff hold superior knowledge and power over students, exacerbated by historical gender imbalances (Bagilhole, 2002; Cooper, 2019; Grove, 2013).

Drawing on Margaret Archer's Critical Realism, the study elucidates the dual dimensions of power within university structures; firstly, the authority to assess and grade students creates significant influence, particularly during assessments like 'crits', and secondly, societal gender norms which position men as more powerful compound this imbalance. Consequently, while male students may feel intimidated, the compounded effect disproportionately disadvantages female students.

Despite spanning two decades, the study's temporal aspect remains relevant, as evidenced by recent cases like the Bartlett case (Guardian, 21 May 2021), reaffirming persistent power imbalances in contemporary educational settings. The study underscores enduring structural issues within academia, particularly in creative disciplines, strengthening understanding of how societal norms perpetuate power imbalances. Archer's framework enhances the critical examination of power structures, emphasising the interplay of agency and structure in shaping students' experiences. The hierarchical nature of universities, compounded by historical gender disparities, contributes to a duality of power-shaping encounters with assessments (Gill, 2010).

4.4.2. Higher Education provides opportunities to gain contacts with people working in the industry and opportunities to work within the industry whilst studying

The results of the survey provide insights into how higher education provides opportunities for students to make industry contacts and gain experience working in the industry during their studies. This can often be useful for gaining creative work through these contacts and providing a network of support. The importance of networking for creative entrepreneurs is outlined in Chapter Two and discussed more fully in Section 5.4.3.

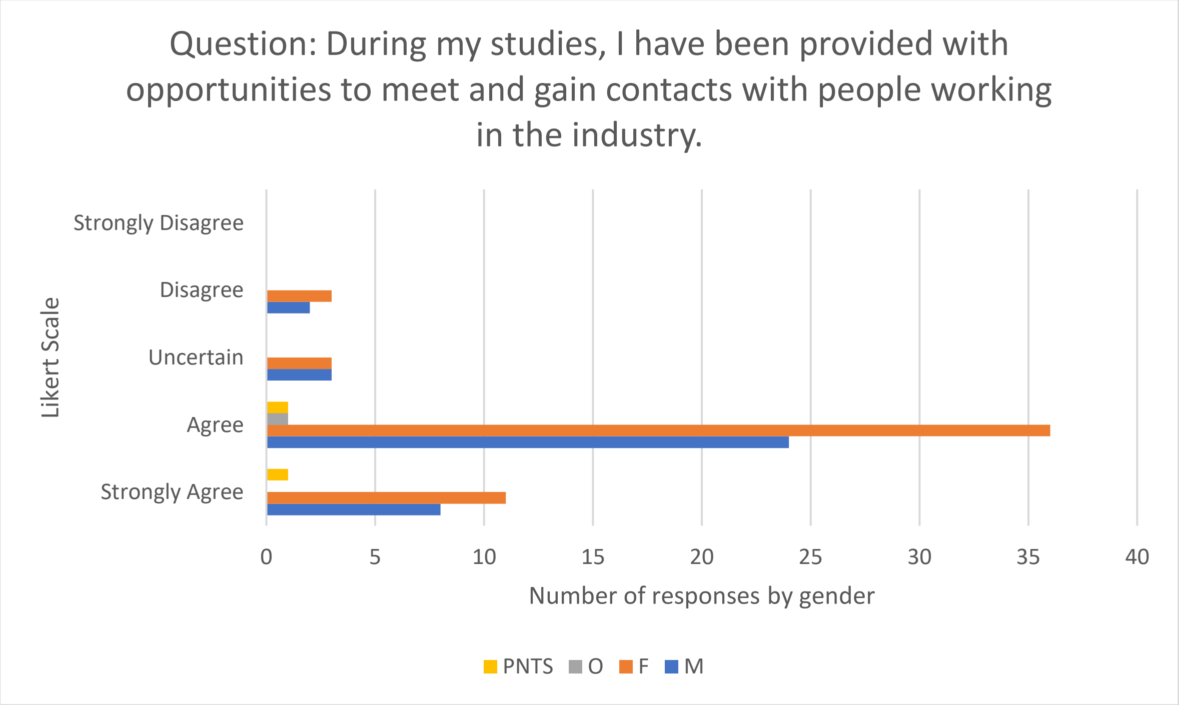

Figure 4.3. Questionnaire Survey Responses to the Likert Attitudinal Question: *During my studies, I have been provided with opportunities to meet and gain contacts with people working in the industry*. Data is shown by count and gender.

Figure 4.3. illustrates findings which demonstrate that students responded positively to the question, recording either ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree.’ Given the importance placed upon the need for networking and gaining contacts as a means of career leverage for people working in the creative industry, this could potentially provide students with opportunities to find work in their chosen industry following graduation through the professional contacts they made whilst studying.

4.4.3. Degree programme including developing business skills and/or entrepreneurial skills and the skills and confidence to go freelance

In the questionnaire survey, students were also asked questions about their preparedness for securing work, including working freelance in their chosen industry. In response to the statement, *Overall, my degree programme has developed the skills and knowledge necessary for my future career*., there was a high count of 'strongly agree' and 'agree'. Most students either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, concurring that they believed their degree course had prepared them for their future careers in terms of equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge. The question of whether their degree programme has included developing business skills and/or entrepreneurial skills was asked. The results found a higher count of 'strongly agree' and 'agree' from the architecture students and a broader spread across all responses from the photography students. There is a much stronger link between architecture education and the architecture industry, as opposed to photography, as the students are required to formally undertake work-based professional training in addition to their academic studies. Therefore, the links and ties between education practice and industry practice may be more closely aligned. The highest count in the responses from photography students in response to this statement was 'agree', indicating nineteen of the photography students in the survey sample did feel their degree programme included developing their business skills and/or entrepreneurial skills. None of the students who responded to the question in the survey strongly disagreed with the statement. Perhaps they did not feel that strongly and largely agreed or were neutral about the statement, or perhaps they did not wish to express overly negative views about their course for reasons unknown.

In response to the question, *I feel confident that my degree programme has provided me with the skills, knowledge, and attitude to set up my own company or become self-employed if I choose.,* both the architecture and photography students who responded to the question had the highest count of 'agree' to the statement. There is a higher count of 'strongly agree' by the photography students. Conversely, there is a higher count of 'uncertain' and 'disagree' among the architecture students. This may be explained by the fact that a high proportion of professional photographers, including those who undertake guest lecturer roles, work freelance. They may have been influenced by their university educators, who have worked, or currently work, as freelance photographers, thereby normalising and role-modelling the concept of freelance photography. Whilst it is quite usual for architects to work freelance, at least at some point in their careers, many spend their entire careers as employees in architecture firms.

4.4.4. Students' attitudes towards being a prospective entrepreneur

The findings demonstrate that student participants recorded as being either uncertain or in disagreement with the following statement: *I see myself as a prospective entrepreneur* (see Figure 4.4 below). This may be due to them not making a connection between working on a self-employed basis and being a prospective entrepreneur and/or not wishing to identify themselves as a prospective entrepreneur for reasons unknown.

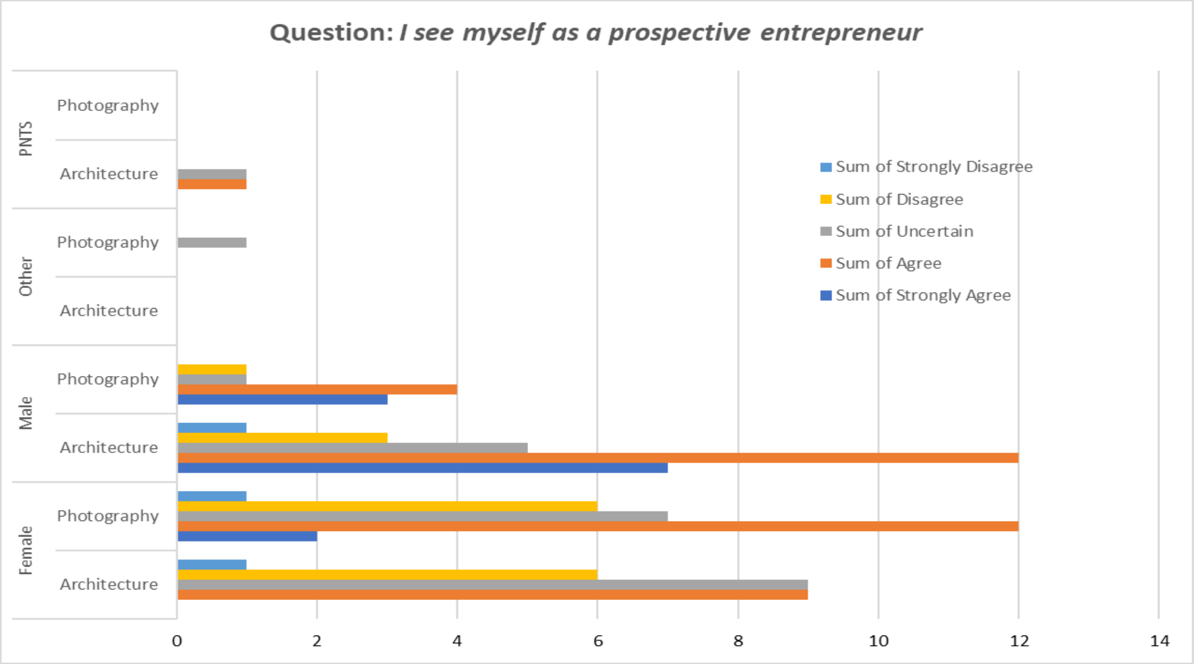

Figure 4.4. Questionnaire Survey Responses to the Likert Attitudinal Question: *I see myself as a prospective entrepreneur*. Data is shown by gender and discipline.

The students responded across all options to this statement in both disciplines with the highest count of 'agree'. This shows that even at this early stage in their career, some of the students are already identifying themselves as prospective entrepreneurs. The findings from this question show that despite a higher proportion of female students responding to the questionnaire survey, there is a high proportion of male students in both architecture and photography who responded with either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' to the question about whether they see themselves as a prospective entrepreneur, arguably identifying themselves as exemplar entrepreneurial subjects (Ahl and Marlow, 2012, 2019).

4.4.5. Higher Education and how the course supports students to obtain work within their chosen industry

In response to the open question: *How has the course prepared you for obtaining work within your chosen industry?*, the following results were identified thematically and categorised in terms of frequency of occurrence:

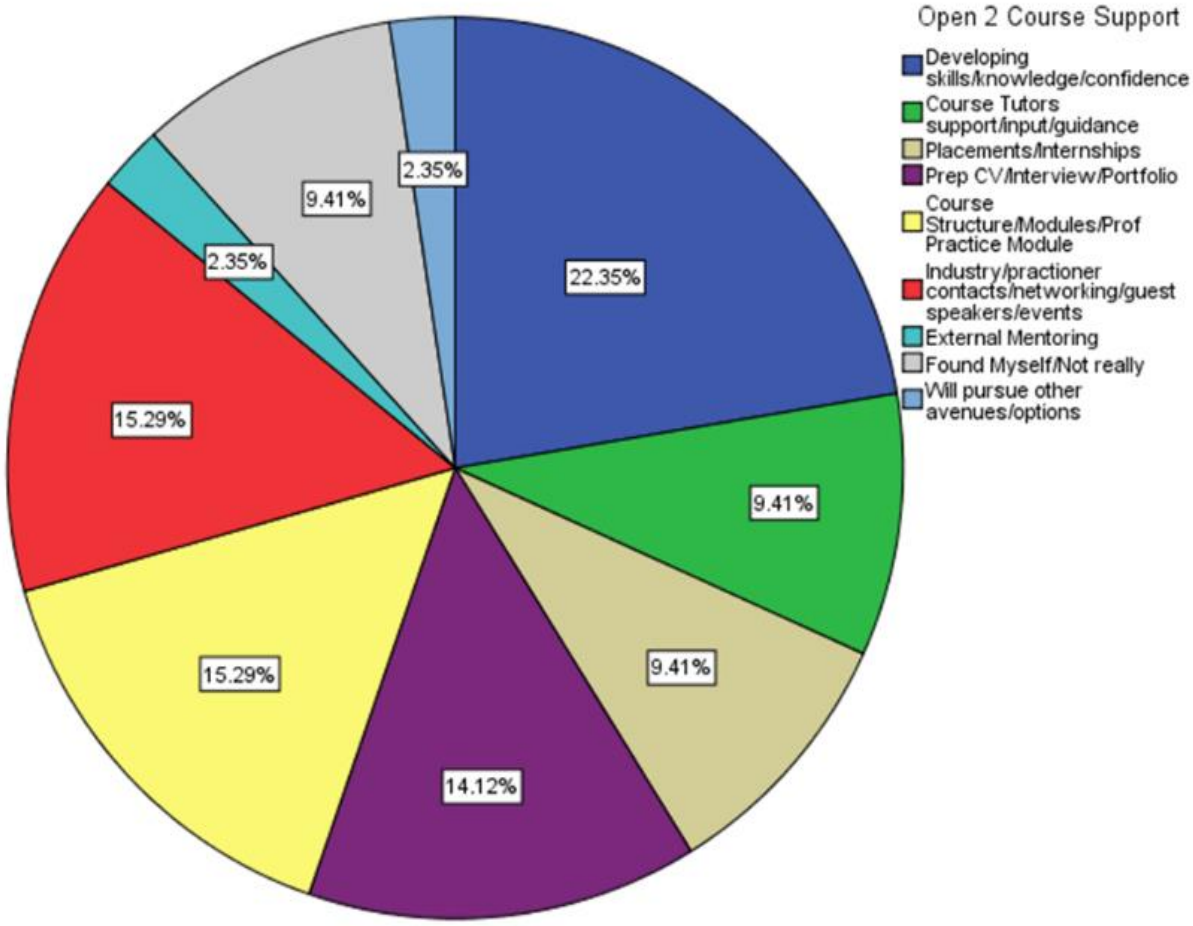

Figure 4.5. Responses to the Open Question: *How has the course prepared you for obtaining work within your chosen industry?* Responses are categorised thematically, coded, and shown by the percentage of the occurrence.

These themes were developed using data saturation. The six-stage thematic analysis process, as devised by Braun and Clarke (2006), was applied in the study (see Table 3.6, methodology chapter). These stages are not simply linear, moving from one stage to the next, but instead, they are a recursive process, where one moves back and forth as required throughout the phases.

The dataset was thereby analysed using a combination of theoretical and experiential thematical analysis methods (Braun and Clarke, 2013). In the highest response to this question, the students reported that the course had developed their skills, knowledge, and confidence (22.35%) in preparing them for obtaining work in their chosen industry. The example extract that follows illustrates a typical response under this category: "The course has greatly developed my skills and knowledge of many areas of photography and increased my confidence to obtain work in a chosen area after my course" (female photography student). This high percentage indicates that these final-year undergraduate students reported that their time on the programme had prepared them for obtaining work in their chosen industry. They had developed a range of required skills and knowledge for their chosen profession, and they had increased confidence to execute these skills. There are two equal second-highest responses. Students reported how the structure of the course and specific modules, usually professional practice modules, had prepared them (15.29%). From their qualitative responses, it became apparent that students saw a direct link between the structure of the course, professional practice modules, and obtaining work in their chosen industry. The following extract is an example: *"Yes, with a professional practice module"* (male architect student). The other response category related to the students engaging with industry practitioners, either as guest speakers and at other university events or gained through placements (15.29%). This response suggests that the students are already aware and sensitised to the importance of contacts and networking supporting them in obtaining work in their chosen industry. *"Yes, it has, through placements and giving us contacts"* (male architect student). The third highest response category related to more practical help in developing their CVs, preparation for the process of applying for jobs in terms of interview practice, and developing and showcasing their portfolio for prospective employers/clients (14.12%). The following is an example extract: *"By providing portfolio reviews, workshops to learn the relevant skills and outside visitors' experiences within the industry"* (female photography student).

There are three fourth-highest response categories. It was reported that course tutors/educators themselves provided career support and guidance, usually via one-to-one tutorials (9.41%), directed by their own experiences of working within the industry. This result concurs with previous studies on the role of educators as mentors and role models (Carey and Naudin, 2006b). Placements and internships also played a key role (9.41%); again, as with the importance placed upon contacts with industry, as discussed above, this shows that students saw the opportunity to spend time working in the industry as valuable in preparing them for obtaining work in their chosen industry. Another category is students reporting that they had found opportunities themselves and had not been supported by their course/university (9.41%). This response category usually had negative connotations, with the students reporting that they felt a lack of guidance and support which they 'had to find' themselves. This response could indicate that students expect and anticipate career guidance and exposure to the industry. What is not clear is why these students reported a lack of support in obtaining work in their chosen industry, whilst other students within the same cohort reported very positively with a range of support mechanisms, as discussed above. Another category recorded external mentoring as a support indicator (2.35%). This may indicate that students believe work experience gained whilst studying is an asset and advantage in gaining work following graduation. Finally, two students reported that they would be seeking other/different career options (2.35%).

4.5. A gender perspective in developing a creative career and developing creative identity

The role of gender in shaping prospective creative careers and developing a creative identity was explored both within the questionnaire survey with study Population One, creative discipline students, and semi-structured interviews with study Population Two, creative practitioners. This section will commence with the findings from the questionnaire survey on this topic.

4.5.1. Findings from the questionnaire survey on the questions about the impact of gender on career aspirations

The survey included questions asking students about the impact of their gender on their future career aspirations.

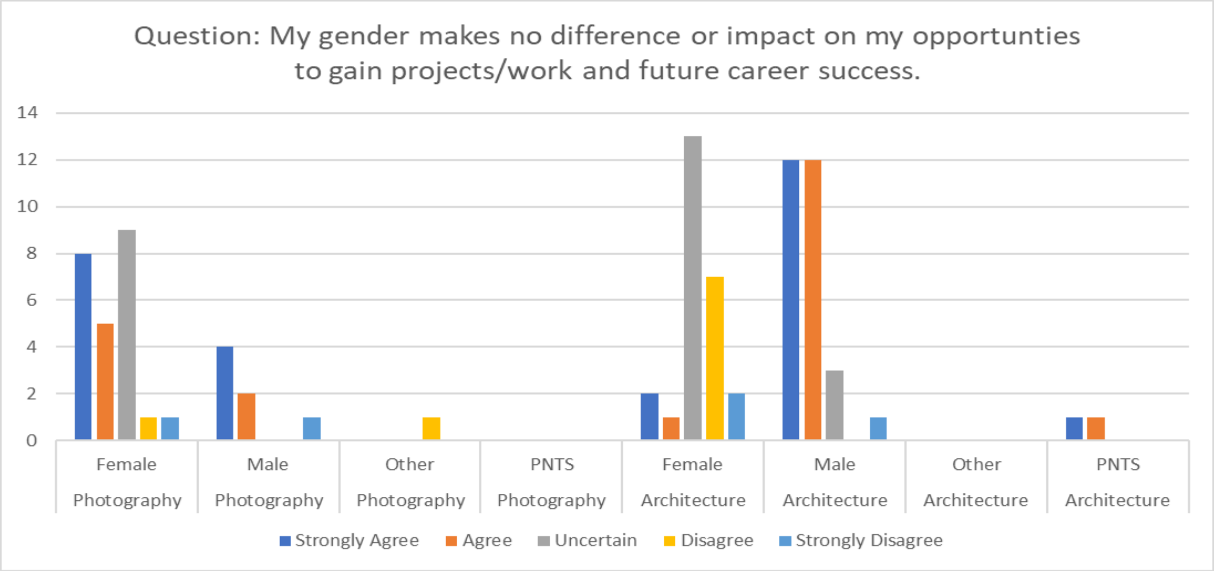

Figure 4.6. Questionnaire Survey Responses to the Likert Attitudinal Question: *My gender makes no difference or impact on my opportunities to gain projects/work and future career success.* Data is shown by gender and discipline.

The results are shown by gender and discipline in the graph above. The female photography students demonstrated a much higher 'no negative impact' category response in comparison to the female architecture students. Given that there are a higher number of female students in the photography sample, this result demonstrates that photography students have a significantly higher response to 'no negative impact' and that the students responded that their gender would not make any difference to their opportunities to gain projects/work and future career success. This quantitative result was backed up by the qualitative data from the responses; "I don't feel that my gender will alter opportunities for me in the future. I feel it will be purely based on my skills" (female photography student); "I've never perceived gender as an issue. The cohort of photographers I am with seems diverse and gender doesn't seem to affect career progress" (male photography student).

Drilling down into the data demonstrated a split of opinion in the response to the question between the female photography students and the female architecture students. The significant response from female architecture students who proportionately were either uncertain or disagreed with the statement that their gender will make no difference or impact on their opportunities to gain projects/work and future career success may be due to sensitisation and awareness of the literature and media reports on the under-representation of female architects in the industry. The architect professional body RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architecture) has, over recent years, undertaken initiatives to try to address this issue, including producing a film launched to celebrate International Women's Day 2018 called *She Draws, She Builds*, celebrating women's careers in the industry. These initiatives follow on from a RIBA-supported research project (De Graft-Johnson et al, 2003*.*). The report highlighted the significant prejudice and difficulties some women found when working in the industry and the following reasons for choosing to leave the industry. This perception was highlighted in the open question where some students chose to leave their thoughts and comments on this question. The survey results showed that given the option to write a qualitative comment to the question on whether their gender will impact their career, there were seventeen responses from female architecture students who chose to expand their views further beyond responding to the statement. They expressed concerns about the fact that architecture is a male-dominated industry and the reported gender pay gap. Given that the students took the time to write and express their concerns in such a precise and forthright manner provides a strong indication that they have significant concerns about the industry they are about to enter; "In an industry dominated by men, being a woman comes with a smaller paycheque, less confidence from one's peers/supervisors, not being taken as seriously" (female architecture student). It is particularly pertinent that at this point in their careers, the students' exposure to the industry culture is largely taken from their placement experience in practice and accounts from people working, or who have worked, in the industry, as well as reports from literature and the media. The above extract indicates concerns this student expressed over the architecture industry's male dominance, a gender pay gap, and a masculine hierarchical culture that favours males over females. This is not the only female architect student to express concerns about the gender pay gap and male dominance of the industry: "Recent news on gender pay gap -

historically construction is heavily male-dominated, women are not given equal pay for the same role across sectors, therefore I am uncertain about how it will affect my career" (female architecture student). For context, the Royal Society for British Architects (RIBA) published their 2021 gender and ethnicity pay gap data which showed a mean gender pay gap of 18.91% - up from 18.33% the previous year (RIBA, 01 April 2022), indicating their concerns are valid.

The seventeen female students who responded to the open question all wrote comments expressing concerns about a gender pay gap and a male-dominated work environment within the architecture industry. This indicates that this group of students anticipates that their female gender will adversely affect their career experience and career progression opportunities. They are anticipating that they will be going into a work environment that is divisive and does not provide a level platform for talent to progress and thrive regardless of gender. The more surprising finding is that none of those seventeen students expressed a desire not to enter the profession and go and do something else.

The divergence in the anticipation of whether their gender will impact on future career success among photography and female architecture students unveils important insights into the complex dynamics of gender expectations within the creative industries. While the majority of photography students did not foresee gender playing a significant role in their career opportunities, female architecture students demonstrated a less optimistic outlook. This discrepancy may be attributed to historical experiences, media portrayals, and academic research reports that have illuminated the challenges faced by women in the field of architecture. The concerns expressed by female architecture students about how their gender might adversely affect their future careers reflect a heightened awareness of the gendered challenges within the architectural industry. This awareness may stem from direct observations of the experiences of female architects in practice, as well as exposure to media and research narratives detailing the struggles of women in the field.

4.6. Early career influences – mentors and role models

This next section discusses the early career influences of mentors and role models. This section is focused on the semi-structured interviews with Population Two, creative practitioners, and will draw upon the other two study populations where applicable. The creative practitioner participants discussed how mentors and role models supported and influenced their careers, especially in the early stages.

4.6.1. Entrepreneurial network framework for this study

This section discusses the entrepreneurial network framework developed from the data of this study. The findings, as outlined in Diagram 4.2. below, demonstrates the conceptual framework from the networking themes identified within the data. Population Two, creative practitioner participants, have developed informal networks that support and nurture their entrepreneurial intentions and business strategies. These networks are wide-ranging and encompass both informal and formal strands. Each has a different purpose and a different support mechanism. The informal personal networks provide a safe space for sounding business ideas to well-known names in their field who provide inspiration and motivation. The more formal networks provide a more formalised mechanism of support and business enterprise advice. The more formal networks include business networks, as well as workplace mentors and university role models who provide support.

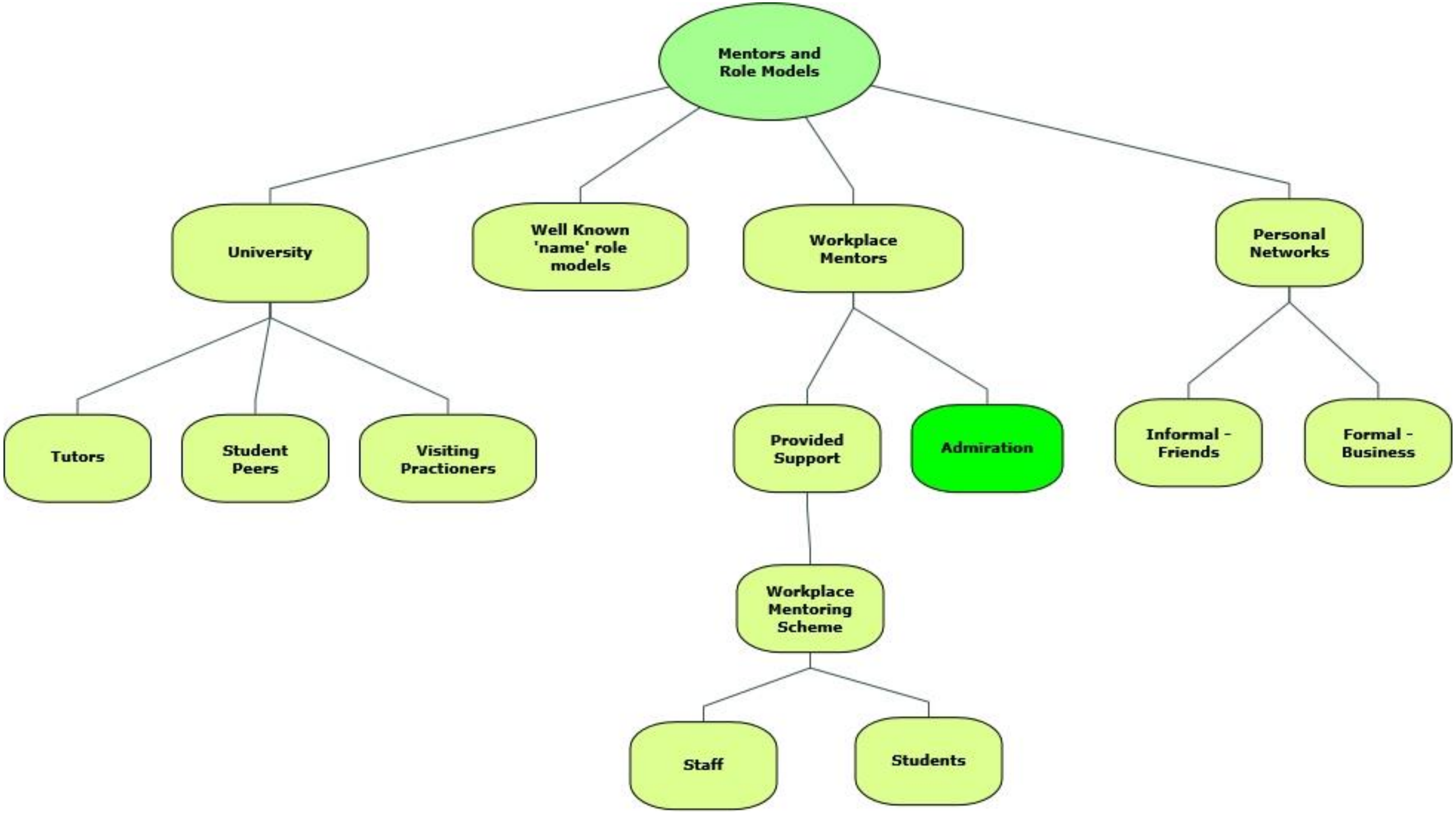
Mentors and Role Models
University
Well Known 'name' role models
Workplace Mentors
Personal Networks
Tutors
Student Peers
Visiting Practioners
Provided Support
Admiration
Informal - Friends
Formal - Business
Workplace Mentoring Scheme
Staff
Students

Figure 4.7. Entrepreneurial Network as identified within the study. Researcher 2019

4.6.2. Mentors and role models – university tutors

The role of university tutors as mentors and role models was identified as a theme within the data set. The traditional approach of the master-apprentice model is no longer so prevalent in creative disciplines. Students are asked to develop simulated 'real-life' projects in the studio for assessment. This more student-led Participatory Design Experience (PDE) approach to curriculum design and assessment lends itself to a shared knowledge approach (Salazar Ferro et al., 2020). Therefore, the university tutor's role is more facilitative as opposed to a directive one. Participants discussed how their university educators shaped and supported their university experience and their careers, sometimes way beyond graduation. The participants recognised their university tutors as experts in their field, often with current or previous industry experience. This is coupled with the participants reporting feeling supported and guided through their studies and career trajectories. Talking about this issue, one of the study participants, Derek, put this very succinctly when discussing how his university tutors acted as a mentor and encouraged his career: *"There was a tutor there who inspired me, she said, 'you can do this go on'. So that inspired me to do it."* This view was echoed by the findings in the student questionnaire survey. The results found that in response to the attitudinal Likert question, 'I have met some very inspirational teaching staff and practitioners on this degree programme', the majority of the participants agreed with this statement, as fifty-three students selected 'strongly agree' to the statement, thirty-nine students selected 'agree', but only one student selected 'uncertain', and one student selected 'disagree.' No students selected 'strongly disagree'. This indicates that the students who responded to that question considered that they had met some very inspirational teaching staff and practitioners during their studies. A positive correlation was found between the views of the creative practitioners and the students who participated in this study who agreed that university staff were aspiring and acted as mentors. This further adds to the entrepreneurial network conceptual framework of university staff as mentors, who inspire their students both before and post-graduation. This finding demonstrates the significant influence of university tutors as role models within the creative industries in supporting and nurturing future talent. Following graduation, some students return as alumni and provide advice and mentor current students, making this a circular arrangement. Whilst there are many positive outcomes to this arrangement, it could also indicate that there is a closed learning loop, with little influence outside the sector.

4.6.3. Mentors and role models – student peers

The theme of the role of student peers was also identified within the data as a source of support for the participants' career formation. Peer mentoring can be described as different from traditional mentoring. Traditional mentoring consists of a hierarchical relationship in which the mentor is considerably older and more experienced than the mentee. Peer-to-peer mentoring provides a more equal relationship, where two individuals of similar age and/or experience come together for both career advice support (sharing information and developing career strategies) and psychosocial support (emotional support and personal feedback). There is evidence that the participants in this study experienced both types of peer mentoring during their time as students and often continue to receive and provide peer mentoring. When discussing how the few female students formed a close friendship group and supported each other, Deborah stated: *"…so we could bounce ideas off each other and that was nice."* In addition to providing peer-to-peer support and sharing ideas, designs, and ways of presenting, the architects who participated in the study studied at a time when there were few women on the course, and this also provided solidarity and group support. This view was echoed by another architecture participant:

> So basically, the same people I started out with had shrunk. There was (sic) only six women who started off with me and we ended up as three... As students because we were so small in number, we were very supportive of each other, did projects and collaborated quite a lot. So, I think in terms of students it wasn't very macho, we were very supportive. (Donna)

The small number of females in this cohort had a pronounced impact on one participant's reflections on her university experience, indicating a sense of gendered unity and shared identity (West and Zimmerman, 1987). This finding highlights the significance of the female student peers in shaping the participant's perception of her educational journey. The participant notes that she remains in touch with and is still good friends with her female student peers, highlighting the enduring nature of the bonds formed during their university days. The ongoing peer-to-peer support and mentoring among these women, even years after graduation, underscore the strength of the connections forged during their student years.

However, the drop-out rate within this small group of female students is noteworthy, decreasing from six to three, resulting in a 50% attrition rate. The fact that only three female students graduated suggests that the initial low numbers entering the industry contribute to the overall scarcity of female architects. The participant's inability to explain the reasons for the three female students choosing to leave the course raises questions about the challenges they may have faced during their education.

Donna's reference to the student peer group as being supportive and not 'very macho' implies that her experiences outside of this small group were not always as positive and collaborative. This observation suggests that the female students who chose to leave may have encountered a less supportive and more 'macho' environment elsewhere, contributing to their decision to exit the course. The notion of an unsupportive and 'macho' atmosphere aligns with broader discussions about gender dynamics within male-dominated fields, such as architecture. The sense of gendered unity and shared identity among the female student peers reflects the importance of supportive networks for women in male-dominated fields. However, the high attrition rate and the participant's remarks about experiences outside of the peer group highlight the persistent challenges and potentially unwelcoming environments that female students may encounter.

This finding also underscores the need for critical reflections on the structural and cultural aspects of architectural education and practice. The gendered dynamics within the profession, as evidenced by the 'macho' atmosphere mentioned by Donna, may contribute to the attrition of female students. Institutions and practitioners must critically examine and address these challenges to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment for aspiring female architects.

The small number of females in the cohort and the resulting impact on the participant's reflections emphasise the importance of gendered experiences within architectural education. The enduring support and mentoring among female peers demonstrate the positive influence of a supportive network. However, the high attrition rate and potential negative experiences outside of the peer group highlight the ongoing challenges that female students face in navigating a male-dominated field.

4.6.4. Mentors and role models – visiting practitioners

Creative discipline courses are populated with guest speakers and guest lecturers who are practising practitioners (Carey and Matlay, 2007). The participants both benefited from the experience as students and many of them now offer this role to various universities as part of their practitioner career portfolio. Elsa, a photographer, reflected: “It was interesting to hear other people, they talked a lot about their work, it was more contextual than it was practical.” The sharing of ideas and knowledge is not the only role which visiting lecturers play in the development of creative discipline students' career formation. It was widely recognised within architecture that the visiting lecturers were there as ‘talent scouts’ to seek out students who showed real potential to be able to offer them roles in their firms. Indeed, a couple of the architecture participants obtained employment in architecture practices through connections made with visiting lecturers at their respective universities:

> Yes, we did have a few, a lot of the tutors were part-time, and they also practised as well. All of them gave us any advice with regards to finding work. Weren’t just there as tutors, they were also headhunting for the best talent or keeping their eye out at least for applicants. (Clive)

The last quote from a participant architect said it was something he would be keen to do once his business grew and he was seeking to recruit new staff. Having observed this practice as a student, he recognised how it works and continues to ‘play the game’ as a practitioner and ‘talent scout’ by going to a local university as a visiting lecturer. Thereby, the culture of securing talent via this mechanism continues. Whilst this may be a positive experience for those students who are offered opportunities, the practice lacks diversity of recruitment practices with this use of informal recruitment practices. This practice is not shared in the photography industry, where the photography practitioners view new graduates as potential future competition. Whilst two of the photographers interviewed regularly go to university to run courses and provide guest lectures, they do so for economic reasons to generate additional income. They are not seeking to recruit staff or seek out future talent.

4.6.5. Mentors and role models – well-known ‘named’ role models

Mentors and role models who were well-known names in their field were often cited as an influence during their studies and early career. The creative practitioners, both architects and photographers, discussed how well-known architects and photographers were an inspiration to them and were studied during their degree programmes. The role models remained an influence as someone whose work they admired during their early careers and as they were getting established. This admiration dimmed a little as they furthered in their careers and became more familiar with the process and culture of how people became well-known and established in their field:

> You definitely look up to people along the way. One thing I didn’t know is that the really good photographers only show maybe one photo a month. I didn’t know this at the start so when you go on their website you go ‘oh that’s incredible, that’s incredible’. So, you might see ten incredible pictures, but that’s their best stuff over ten years. (Edmund)

It is not only getting more familiar with how the industry works in terms of how well-known names operate and showcase only their best work that the practitioner participants reported on, but they also become more aware of the well-known names' reputations in terms of how they behaved and operated within the industry. This awareness increased as they became more knowledgeable of the industry and gained more insider knowledge, changing their views from 'hero-worshipping' to a more measured response. This awareness of well-known names' reputations tarnished some participants' admiration of them, as indicated in the below extract from the interview with Donna:

> There is an architect whose work I really admire called [name of male architect]. Then I recently read in an article about him that he is a complete tyrant in the office and makes all the women cry. Employs lots of women and then is horrible to them all. It really upset me because I like his work and I think it is beautiful, so I'm disappointed and really want to find somebody like that who actually has integrity and behaves appropriately. (Donna)

This participant's discussion about their admiration for a particular architect's work, coupled with their disappointment upon learning about reported inappropriate behaviour within the office, reveals a nuanced perspective on the quest for role models in the architectural profession. As a female architect herself, the participant expresses a longing for a role model who not only excels creatively but who also exhibits personal integrity and appropriate behaviour, particularly towards female architects. The participant's acknowledgement that bad behaviour is not exclusive to male architects, citing a female architect as an example, adds complexity to the discussion. This recognition is essential for a more nuanced understanding of gender dynamics and power structures within the architectural profession. It aligns with critical theory, particularly the work of Margaret Archer, which emphasises the importance of critically examining structures and behaviours that contribute to inequalities. The participant's quest to find a role model who embodies both creative talent and personal integrity reflects a broader theme identified within the data. Participants in the study seek to align their creative and commercial practices with their personal values and integrity.

4.6.6. Mentors and role models – workplace mentors and personal networks

Depending on their experience, the practitioner participants discussed how having positive mentors in their workplace, especially in their early career, created a positive start to their career formation. This was particularly the case for the architects who, due to the nature of their training, are required to spend a minimum amount of time working in practice. For the photographer participants who work freelance, access to mentors and role models was not as easily available, and many proactively sought out people to act in their role in an informal capacity, through both business networking channels and personal networks of friends and family. Further to participants finding colleagues to act in the role of an informal mentor within either their workplace or outside, some architecture practices run formal mentoring schemes for both staff members and students on placements. It is not within the remit of this study to evaluate or comment on the success or otherwise of the role of either formal workplace mentoring schemes or informal mentors, within or outside of a workplace. For the architect participants who, during their early careers at least, worked in practice, having more experienced people around them could act as a source of advice and support in terms of learning the job and what it entailed to get projects completed. Often, this role was not a formal one but based upon more experienced architects being willing and proactive in providing support and passing knowledge onto less experienced members of staff. Amanda reflects on her experience of receiving valued guidance from a senior colleague during the early stages of her career: "I basically sat next to him, and he taught me what to do. He was very competent, very confident..." The role of the informal mentor teaching someone 'what to do' has been identified in the data as a factor that can support career formation, especially during the student and early career phase. For photographers, they do not have the option of having someone to sit next to them as they are nearly always working freelance. The participants often seek out people and mechanisms to get mentoring and support via either business networking or informal networks, usually via friends and family. The drivers for this support differed in that it was often not industry-specific or related but often in terms of gaining support, ideas, and information on aspects of working freelance such as doing tax returns, finding new clients, and using social media to promote their business. Their use of networking was more varied and often involved multi-strands in a combination of business networking, contacts from university, friends, and family. They flexed and utilised their networks to support their business, in a whole range of different ways, from finding new clients to resolving business problems they encountered, such as how to register with HMRC.

Networking serves as a crucial pathway for gaining access to creative employment, but it also acts as a mechanism of social closure within the creative sector, as noted by Allen (2012, p.10). This tendency to favour individuals with high levels of social and cultural capital creates challenges for diversity in the creative workforce, characterized by a chronic lack of social, ethnic, and gender diversity in some sub-sectors (Creative and Cultural Skills, 2008). The intersection of gender dynamics becomes particularly pronounced in industries like architecture and construction, where senior decision-makers are predominantly men, often from a white, middle-class background. This homogeneity at the top reinforces the status quo and contributes to the engendering of homophily, where individuals prefer to work with others who are similar to them, thereby facilitating trust (Blair, 2001). This imbalance not only limits opportunities for women but also perpetuates a male-dominated culture, making it challenging for individuals who do not fit the traditional mould to navigate and access employment opportunities. The emphasis on personal networks and likeness in recruitment practices, while not necessarily deliberately attempting to exclude certain attributes, contributes to reinforcing the status quo. This perpetuation of informal subjective criteria can further sustain gender inequality within the creative industries, including architecture.

Skeggs' work (2004) on social class becomes relevant here, emphasising how socio-economic factors intersect with gender and contribute to the challenges faced by individuals from marginalised backgrounds. The discussion on networking and recruitment practices in the creative industries, particularly in architecture, enhances the understanding of how these practices contribute to and sustain gender and socio-economic inequalities. This analysis encourages a re-evaluation of informal recruitment methods to create more inclusive and diverse environments.

4.7. Summary of the chapter

This chapter delves into the developmental journey of participants' creative and entrepreneurial identities, starting from their childhood interests and hobbies. Despite external influences, such as familial expectations and limited career guidance from schools, participants' innate drives for creativity remained resilient. As they progressed through education, their engagement with creative activities shaped their choice of subjects and university degrees, solidifying their sense of inherent creativity.

The alignment of assessment techniques with real-world practitioner relationships played a crucial role in reinforcing participants' creative identities. Mentors and role models, including university staff and visiting practitioners, emerged as guiding forces, offering insights on career paths and setting industry standards. Gender dynamics within mentorship relationships influenced students' perceptions of challenges and opportunities within the industry.

Exposure to industry practices, gained through placements and guest lectures, further nurtured students' entrepreneurial identities. Formal pedagogy, combined with mentorship and practical experiences, contributed to their understanding of entrepreneurial behaviours and traits associated with success.

Participants' ability to articulate their creative identity and exhibit traits like risk-taking and resilience played significant roles in shaping their identities. This complex interplay of factors, influenced by societal expectations and gendered norms, underscores the multifaceted nature of identity formation within the creative and entrepreneurial realms.

4.8. Author’s critical reflections

In reflecting on the intricate interplay between childhood experiences and future career trajectories, I contend that childhood serves as a crucial determinant of one's career direction. The unexpected prominence of childhood experiences in shaping the career choices of creative practitioners, as revealed in the interviews, presents a fascinating avenue for exploration. The revelation that individuals in their 40s and 50s were vividly recalling and attributing their career paths to early childhood experiences was surprising and has led to an enriching dimension in the research study. This unforeseen emphasis on childhood narratives prompted a shift in focus from the initially intended exploration of university degree/discipline choices to a deeper investigation of creative identity and self-identity.

Archer's concept of the "resisters and enablers" (Archer, 1998) adds another layer of understanding to the participants' stories, emphasising how external factors and the structural environment either challenged or facilitated their career choices. This contextualises their reality and sheds light on the mental processing of their experiences. Such an analysis opens avenues for exploring how external factors, societal expectations, and structural elements contribute to the construction of creative identity.

Factors such as childhood interests and the influence of family significantly contribute to shaping a child's view of themselves and their identity. The perception of enjoying creative activities as a child goes beyond a simple inclination; it lays the foundation for being recognised as a 'creative child.' This recognition, in turn, moulds the emergent sense of being a 'creative person' and forms the foundation of a burgeoning 'creative identity.'

However, this journey is not straightforward, as socioeconomic factors can either act as barriers or enablers to pursuing a creative career. Indirect indicators suggest that individuals' career choices may be associated with their childhood family climate and economic conditions. The stratification of opportunities becomes evident, with children from less economically privileged families facing limitations in pursuing careers that require substantial financial backing. This crystallisation of stratified positions extends beyond socioeconomic factors to encompass intersectional aspects such as gender and ethnicity, reflecting notions of privilege.

The revelation of the enduring negative impact of critical reviews, or 'crits', on the creative practitioner participants, even decades after their undergraduate experiences, highlights a critical aspect of the higher education journey. The experiences shared by Gerald and Amanda underscore the importance of recognising the gendered dimensions of creative education. The fact that both participants spontaneously raised gender-related concerns emphasises the need for a deeper examination of how gender norms, biases, and power dynamics intersect within creative disciplines. This calls for a critical evaluation of teaching practices, with an emphasis on fostering an environment that nurtures creativity without perpetuating harmful gender stereotypes. The fact that participants naturally made this connection, even without specific inquiry on the topic of gender, suggests a deep awareness of the gender dynamics inherent in their educational experiences. 'Crits' and similar assessment methods, when perceived as aggressive and intimidating, may inadvertently perpetuate gendered norms and reinforce traditional power dynamics. The enduring impact on individuals' emotional well-being, as evidenced by the participants' narratives, raises questions about the ethical dimensions of such practices and the responsibility of educational institutions to create inclusive and supportive learning environments. My research findings underscore the adverse impact of social structures and masculine practices within higher education, particularly affecting female architecture students. The language used in critical reviews, known as 'crits,' emerged as a significant concern for female students, reflecting broader anxieties about how their gender might negatively influence their future career success, including issues such as the gender pay gap.

The decision to present participants' experiences in their own words, as indicated by the use of full quotations, serves to convey the raw emotion and depth of impact that 'crits' had on them. This approach allows for a more authentic understanding of their experiences, emphasising the need for a nuanced and empathetic exploration of the challenges students face in creative disciplines.

Higher education institutions further contribute to the crystallisation of stratified positions and notions of privilege by projecting ideals of 'ideal students' in their publicity materials. This reinforces certain preconceived notions about who fits into their concept of an 'ideal student' and who does not. The choices made by young people in selecting subjects and universities are influenced by a desire to 'fit in,' highlighting the impact of social structures on educational decisions.

Despite the barriers and challenges that may arise, young people demonstrate remarkable resilience and ingenuity in pursuing careers in their chosen creative professions. I posit that creative identity stands as a dominant factor in propelling individuals toward a career in the creative industries. Through my exploration, I have identified various attributes and attitudes that shape this emergent identity (see Figure 4.2).

Despite these challenges, I was inspired by the resilience and determination of young people in pursuing their creative passions. Their emergent creative identities served as powerful drivers, propelling them forward despite societal and structural obstacles. Through this exploration, I gained profound insights into the complex interplay of personal, societal, and structural factors in career development within the creative industries. It left me with a deeper appreciation for the transformative power of early experiences and the importance of creating supportive environments for aspiring creatives.

Chapter 5 will delve into a deeper exploration of the participants' journey from higher education to a creative career, exploring the nuances of navigating the professional landscape.

Chapter Five: Exploring creative entrepreneurs' career journeys from higher education to creative practitioner

5.1. Introduction

This chapter explores factors that support entrepreneurial formation and concepts of creative identity. The chapter focuses on the second group of participants, the creative practitioners. The chapter is structured as follows: Section 5.2 discusses the importance of career experience and the significance of understanding the sector; Section 5.3 explores factors that support early career entrepreneurial formation; Section 5.4 highlights self-employment/freelance and career drivers; and Section 5.5 identifies future career success and motivational factors.

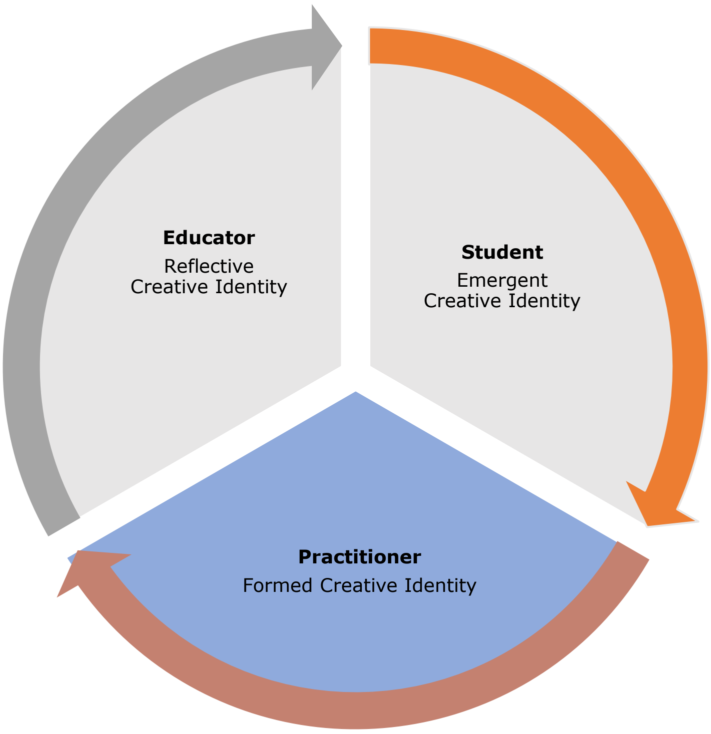
Educator
Reflective
Creative Identity
Student
Emergent
Creative Identity
Practitioner
Formed Creative Identity

Figure 5.1. Domains of the creative career journey and formation of a formed creative identity

5.2. Career experiences and the significance of understanding the culture of the sector they are working within

The early career experiences of the two creative sectors discussed within this study differ widely due to the different contexts and career structures. Each sector has unique attributes in terms of culture, social norms, and ways of operating. These factors shape how individuals working in that industry navigate their career pathways. To fully understand the culture of each sector, they will be discussed separately. It should at this point be acknowledged that the factors that shape creative and entrepreneurial identity are shared across both sectors. The different contexts, different points in time, different experiences, different push/pull factors, and different barriers to progression faced by the creative participants mean that their career journeys are unique to them, regardless of sector.

5.2.1. Career experiences and understanding of the photography sector

Except for one participant who worked as a photography assistant before going freelance, all the photographers in this study went freelance/self-employed upon completion of their degree. One participant had already started his business whilst he was still studying at university. This meant that the participants immediately faced the challenge of building up their businesses from scratch following graduation with limited self-employment experience. The challenges of setting up as a freelance photographer included overcoming logistical challenges such as finding and running their studio and securing loans for equipment. They also needed to develop soft skills/competencies, such as marketing skills, to promote their business and customer relationship management skills to build their reputation and visibility to build a client base and gain work. In terms of marketing and developing their professional profile, the photographers mainly use social media. They reported that most of their business was generated via social media platforms followed by personal recommendations. One photographer, who graduated over twenty years ago, commenced her businesses whilst using traditional advertising media but has switched over to social media platforms as she found this more effective. All the photographers had a website, although they reported that they did not gain much new business via this channel in comparison to other forms of media, such as Facebook. They spent a great deal of time and energy on developing their online presence to build their professional profile. They all stated the importance of marketing their business and developing their personal brand. In effect, it was the activities involved in running their business, as opposed to being creative, that they reported spending most of their time on. All photographers understood the concept that to be successful in the industry, they needed to market their business and build their profile. They all recognised that they were operating in a very competitive industry, and they faced fierce competition from other professional photographers, as well as amateur ones. Many of the more experienced photographers commented on how now competitors include anyone with a smartphone. As Deborah states: "Marketing is running your own business, is being your best salesperson. You have to be able to talk the talk". The theme that ran through all the interviews with the photographers was the importance of interpersonal skills and effective communication skills. All the photographers were keen to emphasise this personality trait, even those who specialised in product photography. They considered that if they were not photographing people, it was nevertheless people who were seeking their services and paying their invoices. Therefore, they all identified understanding people and getting along with people as one of their most vital skills, more so than their technical skills.

> Mine [his business] is very people-oriented, a lot of the work that I do, so my images are of people beeping things at checkouts, putting wheels on vehicles, that sort of stuff. A lot of the time the people I'm dealing with have never been photographed before. They're not professional models or actors. (Edmund)

In contrast, whilst referencing the need to establish trust with their clients, the architects rarely discussed the need to establish a good rapport, nor did they describe themselves as being 'people orientated' by nature. This is not to suggest that the architects interviewed did not have good communication skills, nor that they were not able to establish good professional-client relations. They are all experienced architects with a wide client base, but this was not seen as an essential personality trait in their sector. Indeed, some of the architects referred to colleagues who were brilliant technically but struggled to articulate their ideas and communicate effectively in meetings with clients. Here, the participants are manifesting their agency in their reflective practice by acknowledging how they consciously contemplated their actions which contributed to their social identity (Archer, 1982; Archer, 2000). In this example, how the participants defined themselves was based on what they care about - in this case, becoming a creative entrepreneur.

The second most discussed topic was their sense of what made them unique as a photographer - in essence, their sense of what defined them and differentiated them from their competitors. This was closely associated with their sense of self, not only in terms of how they ran their business but also their sense of creative self. This builds upon the previous chapter findings, in that the participants utilised that creative identity which generated a commercial output expressed as their unique selling point. As Derek states: *"I got a reputation as someone who was a bit different, more of an artist".* The photographers recognised that to be successful in the industry, one had to have a defined sense of photographic style. They needed to develop a way of photographing and viewing the world that was unique to them and made them stand out from the competition. Producing unique creative outputs was intrinsically linked to their sense of creative identity, as it flowed into their creative outputs, which in turn defined themselves as creative practitioners. The commercialisation of creative outputs also marked them as creative entrepreneurs. In addition to their sense of creative self, the other aspect of the photographers' sense of self was how they conducted their business, which usually related to their moral and ethical compass. This, they defined as how they charged for their time and their transparency in their billing methods, as well as how they sought to ensure their clients had a positive experience.

5.2.2. Career experiences and understanding the photography industry – gendered experience

As well as the demands of setting up as freelance, the photography participants also had to contend with understanding how to navigate their industry. Some of the female photographers faced gender stereotyping and sexist language when going about their daily business. This included an assumption that they were the receptionist in their studio (as opposed to the photographer), being asked if they needed help with heavy equipment or asked whether they understood the technical aspects of their equipment, and sexist language being used about them whilst in business network meetings. The below comment from Deborah illustrates some of the sexist language and regressive behaviour that she had experienced:

> When I started going networking [business networks] there were a few people who are bit letchy when you told them you were a photographer, then they started going 'shall I get my coat off now' ... I have asked other photographers, female photographers, and videographers and they say, 'yeah sometimes when you turn up with a camera, they all go 'ooh' and they must think we do porn', I don't understand where that comes from. (Deborah)

The female photographers were asked about coping strategies when they experience this type of regressive behaviour. They all had developed strategies to manage it from being 'super polite' about gendered assumptions to casting 'withering looks' and providing 'put down comments' to those who used gendered and sexist language. This gendered aspect of photography was noted by the male photographers interviewed who were able to recognise that there were times when being a man had an advantage to their career. Edmund, who works mostly as a commercial product photographer with businesses for promotional materials commented, "The best way to put it is that I think it is easier for a guy to go into these factories, and have a level of respect, which I know sounds absolutely ridiculous". The one area identified by the participants where being a woman has been considered an advantage was wedding photography. The explanations they gave for this was that generally, the bride selects the photographer, and they tend to feel more comfortable with other females, especially if the photographer is present whilst the bride and other female guests are getting ready. (The researcher notes the assumptions made by the participants here about the implicit norms of the default assumption of weddings as predominately between a male and a female couple.) This was the only branch of photography where being a female could have an advantage. Overall, gender was not seen as either a barrier or leverage into any branch of photography. The photography participants included commercial business-to-business photographers, both female and male, and wedding photographers, both female and male. Applying a Social Constructionist lens, the prevailing gender norms - in this example, 'brides are more likely to feel comfortable with a female photographer' - are often deeply embedded in societal structures and influence various aspects of individuals' lives, including their roles at work (Connell, 2002). From an intersectional perspective, it could be argued that individual experiences are not shaped by a singular factor but rather by the dynamic interplay of multiple social structures and systems of oppression. To comprehend an individual's experience of gender, for instance, one must also consider the intersection of factors such as social economic status (Cho et al., 2013).

5.2.3. Career experiences and understanding of the architecture industry and culture

Due to the need to spend time in practice during their training period, all the practitioner participants started their architecture careers working in practice. Their experiences varied widely in terms of how supportive and positive they found the environment and the culture of the architecture practice.

5.2.4. Career experiences and understanding the architecture industry and culture–gendered experience

One of the female architects interviewed, Donna, had a very challenging experience in the first practice she went to work for upon graduating with her undergraduate degree. Donna described the culture of her first role in a London-based architect company as being very macho and regressive. Apart from two administrative staff, she was the only female member of staff out of sixty people, and in the technical staff, she was the only woman. She describes the culture as being quite bullying and intimidating: "There wasn't a lot of work around at the time, so I felt very lucky to have a job. I was a girl from Yorkshire. I always wanted to work in London, working in Knightsbridge, in a posh office…" She describes the office environment as being full of 'smokers' and 'girly calendars', but she felt powerless to challenge the situation as she said it was an '*old guard generational* *thing and that is the way it was'*. Also, she was relatively young, around twenty-one years old, so did not have extensive experience in challenging such behaviour, especially given that she was also living away from family support. There was an economic recession at the time, because job opportunities were more limited and subsequently, she felt *'very lucky to have a job'*. There was one particular situation that she experienced which she found difficult to describe, even over twenty-five years later: *"… one of the partners… once made an outrageous comment to me which I find very embarrassing to repeat... So, embarrassed you don't react at all well. It was harassment* [pause] *sexual harassment."* Donna felt powerless and too shocked to respond and challenge the person who behaved towards her in that way. That was very much the culture of the time in that practice. She also discussed how other members of staff, usually younger male architects, were not like this at all and they often went out after work for drinks. She said it could also be a fun place to work.

Often difficulties experienced by female architects are explained by close links to the male-dominated construction industry. The female architects interviewed for this study, whilst having experienced some negativity and sexist comments whilst on-site, felt that most of the challenges and difficult experiences they faced came from the culture within the architect practice. On being asked about her experience of being on a construction site during this time, Donna could not recall anything particularly noteworthy; it certainly had not had the same negative impact as the experience of being in the office: *"I think they mostly just ignored me. There were a few raised eyebrows about a woman being out on-site. I can't remember anything in particular anyway".* Donna's experience in this practice gives credence to the concerns the female architecture students expressed over the imbalance of gender in terms of unequal pay and the male-dominated hierarchical leadership structure (De Graft-Johnson, Manley, and Greed, 2005). These issues were also seen as a potential barrier to their careers by the female architecture students within the questionnaire survey (see section 4.5.1).

Significantly, all bar one of the female architects interviewed in this study had experienced sexist comments and regressive behaviour directed towards them due to their gender whilst on construction sites. This was reported by the female participants themselves and observed by the male participants: "So I remember going out on-site when I first started with [female name], she's been my boss since I first started, and people would look at me for decisions rather than her and I'd be thinking, I'm just a student she's the boss" (Bertie). Historically, architecture has always been the preserve of men. There is a famous photograph of the leaders of the high-tech movement - Norman Foster, Richard Rodgers, Michael Hopkins, and Nicholas Grimshaw - who in the 80s and 90s were the leading high-tech modernist firms (Architects' Journal, 5 March 2014). There is a photo of them all together, but although the practice belonged to Michael and Patti Hopkins, two equals, she was airbrushed out of the photo. This may have made female students question whether they wanted to go into architecture, as it seemed like a man's game. Women, even very successful ones, do not just get figuratively airbrushed out of the picture, it seems.

A couple of the female architects in the study reported that senior female architects they had previously worked for were also not supportive towards trainee architects and there was not much 'sisterhood' that went on in these practices. They had had reports and seen evidence of bullying behaviour, causing trainee architects to be very distressed by senior female architects too: "She was quite scary I have to say. She was very hard-nosed. I always say to people now 'don't think women are particularly sisterly career-wise'" (Donna). This raises questions about how some women are so embedded in the socially constructive norms that they acquiesce to the status quo, tacitly endorsing and perpetuating structural inequalities through downplaying and silencing (Lewis et al., 2017, p. 219). Given these accounts are so compelling and concerning for young women who wish to go into architecture, they validate the concerns expressed by the female architecture students within the questionnaire survey.

This type of regressive and bullying behaviour does not seem to be embedded within the culture of all practices either historically or, more significantly, at present. Indeed, there were also many accounts of the participant architects finding supportive and collegiate behaviour, both within the senior staff and their peers. It should also be emphasised that all the participant architects were keen to ensure that the negative experiences they faced during training did not continue and were keen to provide accounts of how the culture within architecture practices has changed for the better:

> Yes, that’s [collegiate] a good word. We’re a studio so we are all together, no one sits in an office. So, we all sit in groups of four together. So, we made a decision that everyone would do everything, and we work across and sit in groups of four that create a nice atmosphere. (Amanda)

Given the structure and culture within the architecture sector, it would seem there is an unconscious bias which encourages male entrepreneurial behaviour within architecture firms to win large projects and impress clients, behaviour which will advance their careers. For women to gain control over their careers, their interests may be better served by exerting their entrepreneurial behaviour by going freelance. As a freelance architect, the opportunities to secure projects beyond small domestic dwellings, such as loft extensions and so forth, are very career-limiting. It seems female architects are bound by their gender to a domestic setting. If they have children, the long-hours culture of the industry means that they may select to work part-time and spend more time at home; if they go freelance, they are bound by the structure of the industry to be limited to small-scale, domestic-dwelling projects.

5.3. Factors that Supported Early Career Entrepreneurial Identity Formation

The factors that support early career entrepreneurial formation are complex and wide-ranging (see Figure 5.2 below). As discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2), this study has focused on behaviour, personality traits, and risk-taking (Jones et al., 2019) as the main factors in framing entrepreneurial formation.

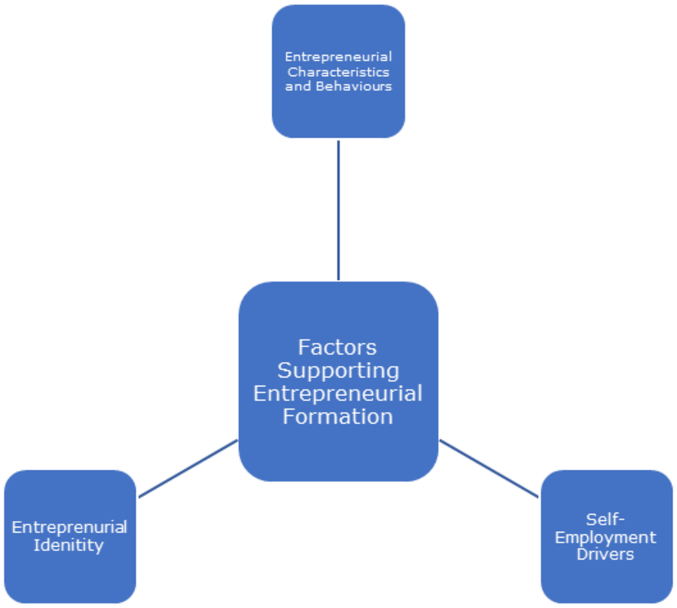
Entrepreneurial Characteristics and Behaviours
Factors Supporting Entrepreneurial Formation
Entreprenurial Idenitity
Self-Employment Drivers

Figure 5.2. Factors that support entrepreneurial identity formation.

The classification of entrepreneurial motivations into 'push' and 'pull' factors serves as a foundational framework for understanding the diverse drivers behind individuals venturing into entrepreneurship (McClelland et al., 2005; Schjoedt and Shaver, 2007; Segal, Borgia, and Schoenfeld, 2005). 'Push' factors, often characterised by personal or external circumstances, tend to carry negative connotations, while 'pull' factors represent the positive attractions drawing individuals towards entrepreneurial pursuits, such as identifying a promising opportunity (Dawson and Henley, 2012).

In examining the diagram's left-hand side, we delve into factors rooted in an individual's characteristics and behaviours that contribute to entrepreneurial formation. For instance, the strong desire of 'not wanting to do a real job' or experiencing a 'difficult start in employment' can be categorised as 'push' factors. These elements suggest that adverse circumstances or personal preferences may act as catalysts, compelling individuals to seek alternative paths beyond traditional employment.

Conversely, on the right-hand side of the diagram, we encounter factors that are more aligned with 'pull' motivations, such as 'having a career that they enjoy.' These aspects signify positive attractions that entice individuals towards entrepreneurship, emphasising the pursuit of fulfilling and enjoyable career paths.

The transition to categorising participants into three distinct groups — those who 'definitely' identify as entrepreneurial, those who 'definitely do not' identify as entrepreneurial, and those who 'reluctantly' identify as entrepreneurial — adds nuance to our understanding of entrepreneurial self-perception.

The participants who 'definitely' see themselves as entrepreneurial likely exhibit a strong alignment with the 'pull' factors, expressing a genuine attraction to the opportunities and rewards associated with entrepreneurship. Conversely, those who 'definitely do not' identify as entrepreneurial may be more influenced by 'push' factors, indicating resistance or aversion to the negative connotations associated with entrepreneurial endeavours.

The group of participants who 'reluctantly' identify as entrepreneurial introduces a layer of complexity, suggesting a nuanced interplay between 'push' and 'pull' factors. These individuals may feel a certain degree of compulsion or necessity to engage in entrepreneurship, possibly due to external pressures or circumstantial factors, even if their inclinations lean towards a more traditional career path.

By linking these two sections together, we gain a holistic understanding of how the interplay between 'push' and 'pull' factors influences individuals' entrepreneurial motivations and self-identifications. This nuanced perspective contributes to a more comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted nature of entrepreneurship, acknowledging the diverse motivations that shape individuals' decisions to embark on entrepreneurial journeys.

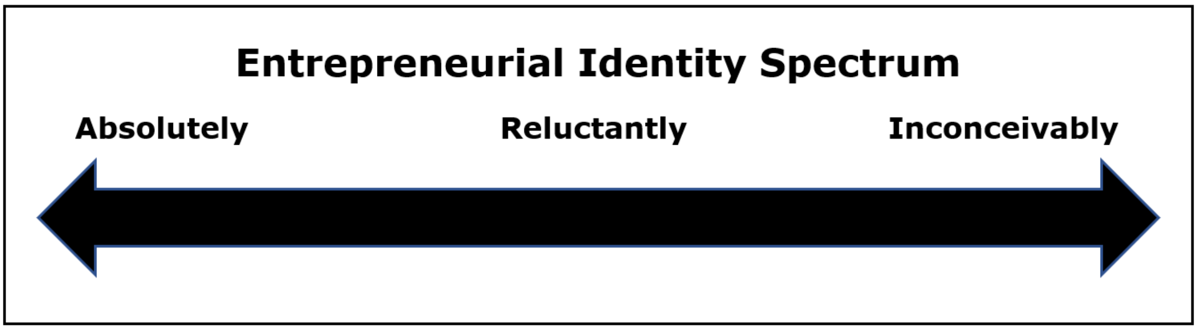

Figure 5.3. The entrepreneurial identity spectrum.

Across this spectrum, there were participants who clearly and positively identified themselves as an entrepreneur. They recognised this label as their self-identity in terms of their behaviours towards their career and how they approached and ran their businesses.

5.3.1. Combined creative and entrepreneurial identities typology

The study findings indicate that producing work which has commercial value seems to serve as a validation of creative identity. Therefore, creative identity and entrepreneurial identity are intertwined, whether the concept of entrepreneurial identity sits comfortably or not. Noting that the concept of entrepreneurial identity is across a spectrum, the concept of creative identity is not homogenous and universal either. Self-identity is complex and multi-faceted. Given that individuals integrate many macro-identities, the combination of creative identity and entrepreneurial identity intertwine to operate commercially and provide validation of themselves as creative professionals.

The author identified the construct of combined creative and entrepreneurial typology with four different sub-sections in their research. These are *indisputable creative identity, devoted creative identity, altruistic creative identity,* and *embedded creative identity.*

Indisputable creative identity

This term has been applied when participants define their sense of creative self as 'not sure what else they would do'. This defines their sense of creative self or creative identity to be the thing they do because they could not imagine doing anything else. Therefore, it becomes their identity through the planned absence and detachment of any other identity. It should be emphasised that this 'indisputable creative identity' does not support the narrative that they had a sense of not being sure what else they would do, in terms of who they are or other career options. The narrative describes the concept of their creative identity as being so all-consuming that they could not imagine being anything other than a 'creative'.

> *"It's part of my identity... If you took it away, I'm not sure what you'd replace it with really".* (Frank)

Therefore, their sense of being creative is indisputable, as no other alternatives could be envisaged.

Devoted creative identity

This term has been applied when participants define their sense of their creative self using terms of romantic endearment, such as love, i.e., '*I love being an architect*.' This concept of doing a role that they love has been explored in literature such as Taylor (2011) and is an archetypal definition of the concept of creative identity. This evolves into further issues discussed in other studies about the downsides of this driver in terms of doing what you love - for little or no pay (Pratt and Jeffcutt, 2009).

Altruistic creative identity

This term was applied when participants defined their sense of creative self concerning their creative outputs as 'being a tool for good.' They utilise their creative identity as a driver for positive change. They seek to produce creative outputs that have socio-economic value. These outputs have the potential to make a positive impact on society, such as documentary photography or designing a school building.

> *"That school I was mentioning, was in the second poorest ward in* [name of place]. *It was a really, really, deprived area. You could feel the effect it had, I think any school would have, with a nice design it felt a bit special. I really believe that love and care in well-designed architecture can send that message out".* (Gerald)

Their primary driver for creative identity is altruism and the sense of being in a role that enables them to work for the greater good of society. This motivational driver is very similar to those of social entrepreneurs who are driven by factors beyond just financial, but also social and environmental (Roundy, 2017).

Embedded creative identity

This term has been applied when the participants define their sense of creative self as being an innate part of their persona. This differs from 'devoted creative identity' in that they do not always describe this in such a positive way using terms of romantic endearment, such as love. Put more simply, this is how they see themselves and who they are in terms of their constructed personal sense of self.

> *"Yes. I think architects are a very particular type of person. My husband is not an architect… I used to have a lot of parties… it was probably mainly architects at the parties, everyone was very creative, the way they dressed, the way they talked, the things they were interested in, and as I say my husband would come in and bring some of his friends and the marked difference is very startling".* (Elspeth)

The above extract discusses Elspeth's perception of the differences between herself and her architecture friends and her husband and his friends, who are not architects. Here, Elspeth is trying to define how she and her friends are '*creatives*' and how this is embedded within their internal expressions, such as what they are interested in, as well as in their external expressions, such as the way they dress as an understanding of their (and her) sense of creative self, which is inherent in terms of who they are. This term of creative identity is entrenched in the sense of their social identity – 'we are creatives'. Furthermore, it is entrenched in a sense of belonging to a wider collective and sharing a sense of space and cohesiveness.

The study underscores the interconnectedness of creative identity, creative output, and economic value in shaping individuals' perception of themselves as 'creative.' This interplay is visualized in Figure 5.4, illustrating the necessity for a harmonious balance of these elements for individuals to derive a genuine sense of their creative self. Creative identity, as a concept alone, is deemed meaningless without the tangible expression of creativity through the generation of a creative output. This output, in turn, holds significance when it possesses economic, social, or environmental value—or a combination of these.

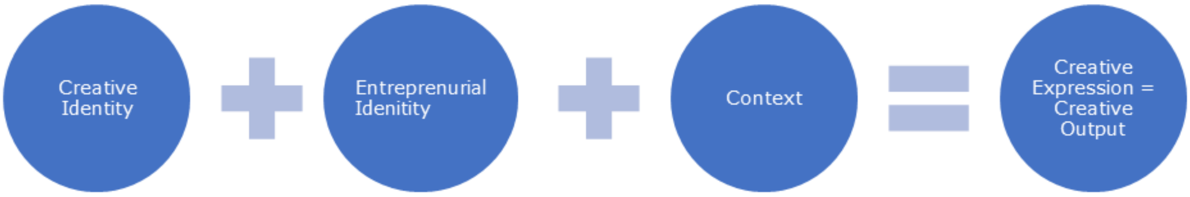

Figure 5.4. The transformation process of creative identity via entrepreneurial identity via context equals creative outputs

Participants emphasised the importance of striking a balance between creative identity, creative output, and the monetary value associated with that output to solidify their self-perception as 'creative.' The nuanced relationship among these factors highlights the complexity of identity formation within the creative domain. The contextual backdrop, including the participants' career stages, influenced the emphasis placed on economic versus social-economic value. Early-career individuals often prioritised the economic value of their creative outputs, while more established professionals sought a balance between economic and social-economic value.

Aligned with their creative identity, participants expressed a desire to avoid what they referred to as a 'real job.' This desire reflected an aspiration for roles providing creative outputs and contributed to the formation of an entrepreneurial identity. The aversion to a 'real job' was not about evading work; rather, it stemmed from a deep-seated desire to pursue something they loved, thus blurring the lines between work and passion. This desire manifested in entrepreneurial behaviours, attributes, and competencies, supporting the participants' engagement in creative endeavours that held both cultural and economic value.

The dialogue between the participants' desire to be creative and their entrepreneurial identity is evident in their articulation of not wanting a 'real job.' This narrative serves as a rationale for choosing creative careers, with an emphasis on pursuing a passion rather than engaging in what they perceive as 'hard work.' The participants navigate this dialogue to express their rationale for choosing creative industries and achieving entrepreneurial outcomes, with the entrepreneurial aspect sometimes downplayed.

The study's findings align with Glăveanu and Tanggaard's (2014) notion that a creative identity shapes engagement with work. Participants aspire to generate creative outcomes aligned with their fluid and dynamic creative identity, which can flex and respond to varying contexts. The link between creative and entrepreneurial identity emerges, although it is not universally acknowledged by all creative practitioners. While participants universally understood and articulated the concept of creative identity, the understanding of entrepreneurial identity varied, reflecting the lack of a universally agreed-upon definition.

In essence, the study illuminates the intricate dance between creative and entrepreneurial identities, shedding light on how individuals navigate the intersection of passion, work, and self-perception within the dynamic realm of the creative industries.

The notion of the reluctant or embarrassed entrepreneur finds resonance in Coulson's (2012) study on musicians in the North East of the United Kingdom. In this research, the concept of the "accidental entrepreneur" emerged as a descriptor for musicians' work patterns and their attitudes towards commerce. The participants faced a tension between their desire to remain true to their creative identity and the practical need to engage in various projects—both paid and unpaid, as employees or self-employed—to develop a portfolio career and earn a living.

This tension is evident in the narratives of the participants, who sometimes adopt a reluctant entrepreneurial identity. One participant, Claire, candidly expresses her feelings: "I'm probably not very entrepreneurial BUT [said with emphasis] on the other hand, I've not given up yet when it's got difficult. I do find a drive from somewhere. Where that comes from, I don't know [laughs]." Claire's statement encapsulates the struggle between maintaining creativity and recognizing the necessity of entrepreneurial behaviours for success in her chosen field. Despite claiming not to be very entrepreneurial, she acknowledges her resilience and determination to persist in making her photography business work over the past two decades.

Another participant, Derek, similarly grapples with the idea of identifying as an entrepreneur: "God no. I don’t. Well, I am a little bit. I’m a good photographer, I have a good eye and I’m good with people. But I’m not an entrepreneur, no." Derek's response reflects an immediate contradiction, oscillating between denying any association with entrepreneurship and conceding a partial acknowledgement of it. He then delves into a reflection on his identity, expressing a perceived reversal of priorities—being more of a photographer than a businessman. However, he acknowledges the wisdom in a statement by an American photographer, recognising the necessity of being a 90% businessman to succeed in the field.

This reluctance to embrace the entrepreneurial label, despite acknowledging the inherent business aspects, suggests a nuanced negotiation between creative identity and the pragmatic realities of sustaining a career in the arts. Derek's discomfort with the term "entrepreneur" contrasts with his ease in identifying as a "good photographer," underscoring the complex interplay between creative and business identities.

These narratives depict individuals navigating the intricate balance between artistic passion and the commercial imperatives of their professions. The participants grapple with self-perceptions, revealing a tension between the identity they project - whether as artists or entrepreneurs - and the acknowledgement of the practical demands that define success in their respective creative fields.

The discomfort associated with being labelled as an entrepreneur is a sentiment echoed by multiple participants in the study, aligning with findings from various sources (Beaven and Jerrard, 2012; Anderson and Warren, 2011; Bell et al., 2019; Kašperová and Kitching, 2014; Roundy, Bradshaw, and Brockman, 2018). Edmund, a participant in the research, expressed this unease by stating, "Entrepreneur is a really difficult one, I wouldn't tell anybody I'm an entrepreneur, I'd feel embarrassed."

Upon further exploration of Edmund's perspective, he struggled to articulate precisely why he found the term embarrassing, despite recognising that many of his behaviours and personality traits aligned with an enterprising and entrepreneurial mindset. As a photographer operating in what he acknowledged as an often challenging and inhospitable environment, Edmund was keenly aware of the need to continually seek new clients, build his business, and establish a solid reputation. The inherent uncertainty and financial risk associated with being self-employed in a competitive field further emphasized the complexities of his professional reality. Edmund's reluctance to embrace the term "entrepreneur" may be influenced by societal expectations and gender norms surrounding entrepreneurial identity. Entrepreneurship has historically been associated with masculine qualities, perpetuating a gendered stereotype that may lead individuals, particularly men, to grapple with the alignment of their self-concept and societal expectations (Brush et al., 2009; Marlow and McAdam, 2013).

Edmund identified key entrepreneurial characteristics within himself, such as being driven, having initiative, and having the courage to navigate challenges, including the potential for mistakes and missteps in professional interactions. His acknowledgement of the need to proactively engage with the competitive landscape, stay motivated, and position himself strategically underscored the entrepreneurial nature of his endeavours. However, despite embodying these traits, he remained resistant to adopting the label of an entrepreneur.

This reluctance to embrace the term seems to stem from a nuanced interplay between societal perceptions of entrepreneurship and Edmund's self-image. The societal construct of entrepreneurship may carry certain connotations or expectations that do not align with his personal identity, despite the evident alignment with entrepreneurial behaviours. This highlights the complexity of individual perceptions of identity within the entrepreneurial context, where external labels may not fully capture the intricacies of one's self-concept and professional journey.

As a male participant in the study, Edmund's hesitation to identify as an entrepreneur might reflect societal expectations related to masculinity. The traditional archetype of a successful entrepreneur often emphasises assertiveness, risk-taking, and a competitive spirit—all traits traditionally associated with masculinity in many cultures. Edmund's reluctance may stem from a tension between conforming to these expectations and recognising the enterprising qualities he embodies. Furthermore, Edmund's struggle to articulate precisely why he finds the term embarrassing could be indicative of internalised gendered expectations. Men, in particular, may experience a sense of vulnerability or discomfort when expressing emotions or uncertainties that deviate from traditional masculine norms. Edmund's acknowledgement of challenges and uncertainties in his entrepreneurial journey might clash with the expectation of presenting a confident and unwavering demeanour.

The analysis of the data illuminates a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between individual identity, societal expectations, and gendered norms in the context of entrepreneurial self-perception. Edmund's reluctance, when viewed through this lens, becomes a manifestation of the ongoing negotiation between personal identity and the gendered constructs that influence how individuals, particularly men, navigate the entrepreneurial landscape. This analysis underscores the importance of recognising and challenging gendered stereotypes to create more inclusive and authentic representations of entrepreneurial identity.

The theme of risk is pervasive throughout this study, reflecting a broader trend observed in the creative industries, where individuals exhibit a notable tolerance for risk (Hartley et al., 2012). This tolerance is a pragmatic response to the nature of short-term, project-based work and the prevalence of self-employment within these industries. Rather than mere tolerance, it might be more apt to characterise this stance as an acceptance of risk, a recognised and integral aspect of operating within the creative sector. Participants, much like their counterparts in creative industries, demonstrate a profound understanding of the industry's culture and operational dynamics, enabling them to adeptly navigate both the advantages and pitfalls associated with their work.

Clive, an architect, succinctly captures the essence of this perspective: "We are one of those industries where you have to rely on new work coming in. You can't rely on existing projects going forever. It is quite a risky industry, especially working for yourself." While Clive's statement is specific to architecture, its resonance extends to participants in fields such as freelance photography. The common thread is the imperative to consistently secure new clients and projects, even for those fortunate enough to engage in repeat business or longer-term ventures. The acknowledgement of this perpetual need to seek new opportunities underscores the intrinsic relationship between creative work and a level of risk acceptance.

For individuals in creative fields, the ability to embrace and coexist with risk becomes a defining aspect of their professional lives. Whether this comfort with risk aligns seamlessly or uncomfortably with their individual preferences, it is a shared reality for the participants and a significant proportion of creatives more broadly (Barbosa, Gerhardt, and Kickul, 2007; Marlow and Swail, 2014; Rigg and O'Dwyer, 2012; Wreyford, 2015; Zurriaga-Carda et al., 2016).

This acceptance of risk is not only a reflection of the practical demands of the creative industries but also a testament to the resilience and adaptability of individuals within these fields. It is an acknowledgement that, within the dynamic and ever-evolving landscape of creative work, the risk is not just an inherent challenge but a catalyst for innovation, growth, and sustained success.

5.4 Self-employment/freelance and career drivers

The below diagram (Table 5.1.) highlights the themes identified from the participants' accounts of the factors which influenced their drivers for continuing their career within their industry. The findings suggest that these drivers emerged at different stages within a career trajectory and at different career junctions, such as a downturn in the economy. The combination of creativity and autonomy as a positive driving force for their chosen career is something that was frequently discussed in the interviews with the practitioner participants. Elsa picks up the point: "I love the freelance running my business aspect of photography." There are several factors identified that support career and self-employment drivers from the interviews with practitioners. These are neither mutually exclusive nor hierarchical, as these drivers were identified in nearly all cases. The participants discussed a range of factors that supported and nurtured the drivers which enabled them to continue working in the industry, even when things got difficult with their businesses. There are many 'push' motivational factors identified, such as a 'difficult start in their career', which have pushed the participants towards self-employment. There are many 'pull factors' identified, such as enjoying the autonomy of running their own business. Each of these factors is discussed in further detail below.

Table 5.1. Entrepreneurial motivational factors supporting career and entrepreneurial formation.

Drivers that support career and self-employment
Resilience and determination
Developing good client relationships
A unique sense of professional identity or USP
Networking
Doing work which makes a positive contribution to society
Need for control flexibility and autonomy
A career with a creative output
Financial viability and financial sustainability
Personal and professional recognition
Continuous professional development

5.4.1. Resilience and determination

The theme of resilience and determination occurred both at different career stages and different career junctions. The name of the theme was chosen to identify the attitudes and behaviours raised by the participants when discussing their careers. This theme manifested across different situations and career stages.

Highlighting the determination and resilience required to successfully pursue their chosen career, one participant discussed how it took him over twenty years from undertaking his undergraduate degree in architecture to qualifying as a chartered architect. Most architects take around seven to ten years. Due to a downturn in the economy, there was little activity within the construction industries; therefore, architecture practices were not taking on new staff during this time. Due to this situation, he was unable to secure a role within an architect's practice following graduation of his first degree. During this period, he took on other types of roles to earn an income. This meant that he had a period out of architecture practice during which graduates normally take their Part 1 and Part 2 architecture qualifications. It meant that he ended up out of sync with the usual timeframe for gaining the necessary qualifications. He described how it took him years of determination and proactive job hunting to eventually secure roles within architecture practices once the economy improved. Over time, he had enough experience working as an architect's assistant to be able to complete his Part 1 qualification, after which he completed his Masters and Part 2, then Part 3, before finally achieving chartered status. This experience meant he was less than positive about the interdependency between working as an architect's assistant and being able to continue studying to become a chartered architect. Frank states:

> To be honest, being at the practice you feel you are almost kept in the practice because of the course. If you weren't particularly happy with where you were, you felt you were better off staying there because of the disruption to the course.

Another participant described how she has had to work hard to refocus her business and professional development skills to keep her photography studio business afloat. She describes how the changing footfall of consumers in the high street, alongside changing consumer buyer behaviour and technological changes, created a massive negative impact on her business. She reported that her work as a studio portrait photographer had all but dried up in recent years and how she nearly gave up the business but was determined to continue to make it succeed. Claire admitted that *"…the business has been fairly tough I would say for four years, and in the past couple of years it's been 'okay am I going to carry on with this?'"* She described how she had changed her style and approach as a photographer to keep up with changes in fashion portraiture photography, as well as using different promotional strategies. She also actively took action to expand her business networks to gain business advice and guidance from other photographers. This demonstrates a more shared, collegiate approach to new product development. The use of networks is not only about sharing ideas but also provides a platform for support when businesses are going through challenges.

The use of supportive networks can be found throughout the creative industries at different levels. Amanda discussed how when she got her first role following her first degree, she found going on a construction site and asking questions challenging: "I can remember quite early on in my career being in tears because some builder had been really awful to me…" She described how, with support and advice from one of her colleagues, she learned she had to prepare well when she went on-site, so she felt more confident and in control when asking questions and challenging decisions. Over time, she learned how to manage this better, both in terms of her professional approach and emotionally. From the discussion, she talked about what she did to improve the situation for herself to get better and feel more comfortable with going out on site. Her gender made this more apparent, as the male trainees did not appear to get quite such a hard time from the largely male-dominated construction site staff. It could be argued that she was determined to continue to do a role she enjoyed and, with the support of her colleagues, learned how to deal with difficult situations and challenging behaviours as opposed to giving it up.

5.4.2. Developing positive client relationships

Some of the creative practitioners discussed their pride in their ability to develop good relationships with their clients. They discussed how this was important to them in terms of their business values, as well as their personal and professional identity. Some of the female photographers discussed how they found that some of their female clients had a negative body image and reportedly hated having their photos taken. An illustration of this is given by Claire: "…especially with women, how they view themselves with self-criticism, being able to show them a picture they really like, I really put a lot of value on." In these situations, the creative practitioners reported that they felt a sense of achievement in ensuring their female clients had a positive experience when being photographed and were happy with the produced images. They stated that they felt it was important as a woman to do what they could to make their female clients overcome their insecurities about being photographed and their negative personal self-perceptions and body image during their interactions with them.

5.4.3. Networking

The use of networking was described by the participant practitioners as having two main uses. Firstly, it served to gain an understanding of the logistical and practical aspects of running a business, for example registering with HMRC. Secondly, it was useful for creating promotional strategies, providing access and securing new clients. The creative practitioners commented that business-to-business networking strategies were often most effective when networking with businesses that they were not in direct competition with but could often complement each other's knowledge of running a small business or being self-employed. As Elsa states: "It's better if they are in a different business because they don't feel like you are trying to steal their business, so you can just share ideas and support each other." The other use of networking was as a way of accessing potential clients - for example, photographers networking with wedding venues for potential business, and architects networking with construction companies for design work.

The use of networking and the underlying reasons for doing so varied with the timespan of being self-employed. The creative practitioners discussed how they frequently accessed business networks at the start of setting up as self-employed and relied on these to help them navigate the various obstacles required when setting up any self-employed business, such as doing tax returns. Once their business was up and running, the main purpose of networking was to exploit opportunities to find new clients and keep the profile of the business high. The other occasion where there was a peak in networking activity came when there was a change in the direction of the business. This could be due to the business facing difficulties with not having enough clients to ensure financial viability, forcing the creative practitioner to choose to change the business. In times of financial difficulty, Claire, a female photographer, made several links to network with other photographers outside of her geographical location. This helped her to gain insights and ideas about both technical changes she needed to make to her way of photographing in terms of keeping up with current trends and ideas for effective promotional strategies:

> …a real network of support. What's really helped me is actually, I'm behind the times on what's happening in the portrait photography world. I need to update my skills; I need to update my style and that has really helped me and is showing a change in the business now.

Their networking activities could also support them with a business change - for example, a male photographer wanted to transition from wedding photography into solely commercial photography, and a female architect relocated to a different geographical area, therefore needing to re-build her reputation and establish a new client portfolio to gain projects. In both these examples, the creative practitioners discussed how they actively sought out new avenues of networking to get their names out there and start to build their business in line with their new change of business focus. They sought both to build upon their existing networks and to find new ones to support them with re-building their business profile and reputation to secure new clients. Most of the networking activities were described as making contacts with other people who worked in the same or a different industry. This could be through various business network meetings or, more informally, through business exhibitions and personal contacts or people they studied at university with. Most of the networking opportunities were described as gender-neutral, in that gender had no significance on opportunities presented nor particularly created barriers. Gerald (male) architect did express the view that it is still the case that networking within architecture is biased towards men:

> There is still a networking thing about male, heavy drinking, and so on. There is a bit of that still there. People get their contact through the golf club, and nights out and that is less appealing to women than men.

Indeed, it is still the case that a disproportionately higher number of senior architecture roles are held by men, as well as there is a clear gender pay gap. The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) reported its gender pay data from 308 employees on 5 April 2019 snapshot, which found a mean pay gap of 19.60%.

5.4.4. A perception of doing work that makes a positive contribution to individuals and society

As discussed in Section 5.4.2, some of the female photographer participants discussed how they engaged with their female clients in ways that minimised their clients' self-criticism and negative body image. They sought to ensure their female clients had a positive experience of being photographed. This is not the only example of participants' activity seeking to make a positive contribution to individuals and/or society. One of the male educator's photographs was very much about putting a spotlight on issues and raising awareness of atrocities and injustices throughout the world. He, and many other documentary photographers, uses photographic imagery to focus attention on issues as a way of engendering positive change. He discussed how he has worked with many NGOs and charities over the years internationally, particularly in the African continent. These had contributed towards raising awareness of injustices and supported the work of agencies who were working to create positive change. In publishing the images, which show the terrible actions and injustices inflicted by sections of society upon others within that society, he sought to publicise and raise awareness of events that otherwise would not have an international platform and would continue to go unquestioned and unchallenged:

> As my work is dealing with social issues for me it has to be somebody who really understands the power of the image. Just being an advocate, just being able to direct people's view of something that maybe they have not looked at before and deepen their understanding of it. Photography is being used as a tool for good. (Ian)

Three of the architects interviewed had chosen to focus their architecture careers working on buildings for public use and had been involved in the development of schools, as well as the development of affordable housing, usually working with housing associations. They discussed the internal tensions this sometimes caused between their desire to be creative in their designs whilst operating under the constraints of working for public and third sectors, where the funds were very limited. During the design stage, features such as environmental innovations often got removed as they caused additional costs to the projects. Often design aesthetics and sustainable features had to be removed to keep the costs as low as possible. One of the architects said he recognised that he was not creating the best designs he could when working for his housing association client, due to budget constraints. He had reconciled his sense of wanting to produce creative designs against his motivation of wanting to create buildings that support his views on social responsibility and creating housing for everyone, not just the very rich. In essence, his sense of altruistic self outweighed his sense of creative self:

> One of my main clients is a local homeless association... So yeah, the designs are not ground-breaking, we try here and there, but we have to maximise the money…. some of my colleagues do big fancy houses for people with lots of money and I wouldn't know how to deal with the clients. I wouldn't have a lot of sympathy for people who couldn't decide which one of the very expensive bath taps to have, it is not something that is going to keep me awake at night [laughs]". (Bertie)

Their motivations, therefore, are more akin to social entrepreneurs who are motivated beyond the need to just make money (Rey-Martí, Ribeiro-Soriano, and Palacios-Marqués, 2016) but drawn to creating something of both social and economic value.

The sense of creative tension was also experienced by another architect, Gerald, who had previously worked for a very large, international architectural firm. He led the team that designed school and education buildings. He talked about how he loved working within the schools' design team, whom he described as a talented and dedicated group of people who were wonderful to work with but within a company that was very commercial and just thought about the bottom line: "So, there was a tension between my desire to take great care, be creative and socially responsible, and the company that was focused upon commercial profits." He went on to say that it did not make him miserable, he just accepted it, as he recognised the firm's need to make a profit and be a financially viable business. This desire for autonomy and to have the freedom to do the sort of projects that he wanted to do was one of the primary motivations behind setting up his own business where he specialised in public and heritage spaces.

Generally, all the practitioner participants wanted to create great work that their clients would be happy with and feel that they had given value. They were all keen to point out that whilst they ran a financially viable business, it was not at all about making money. The financial aspect of running their business was often the area they found most difficult to discuss, not always from simply a privacy perspective, but in general, they acknowledged that in creative industries and creative disciplines, whilst studying, making money, and generating profit was not something that was generally discussed. It was all about creativity (Glăveanu and Tanggaard, 2014).

5.4.5. The need for control, flexibility, and autonomy

Whilst the participants understood the need for companies to be firmly focused on the bottom line, they wanted more control, flexibility, and autonomy over their careers and how they ran their businesses. Some of the photographers had always worked freelance and joked about never having a 'proper' job. One of them had previously worked as a freelance musician and a couple of others had also previously run other freelance businesses. They had never considered doing anything other than working freelance. They valued the autonomy and flexibility of working freelance provided. As Amy states: "…when you work for yourself everything is for you…" They took great pride in the fact that they had built their own businesses up from scratch and ran them the way they wanted to. It was a significant motivator that supported their career and entrepreneurial formation. For them, it was all about the need to have control over their own business and destiny. They described how, through hard work, they had found clients, promoted their business through social media and e-promotions, found and rented studio space, and built up and established their reputation. They also discussed the use of networking to gain knowledge about how to better run their business and to find new clients. They talked about their proficiency in managing risk and how they kept going during difficult times. This group of participants very much fitted with the characteristics and exhibited the behaviours found in many of the literature descriptors about entrepreneurs, even though they may not have considered themselves or identified themselves as such.

The architects' journey to working freelance was different. The training requirements of the profession require a minimum amount of practice experience for their assessment progression. This meant that even if they had gone freelance immediately after qualifying, they spent at least five years working in practice. One of the architects had always intended to work freelance, as she knew from the outset that she wanted the flexibility that this way of working offered. She found the long-hours culture of many architecture practices very difficult, limiting her ability to achieve a life outside of work. Talking about one of the practices she had worked for in London, she described how people would work all through the night if there was a key deadline, usually for little or no extra money. She felt that her colleagues were completely consumed by work, with little or no life outside of it. She found this culture difficult to work in and therefore made the decision early on in her career to work freelance. Elspeth suggests: *"…architecture isn't a religion, and it becomes like that in those sorts of circumstances."*

Other architects also described the culture as being one that expected employees to work hard and long hours if they wanted to progress within the company. This finding concurs with the literature on long-hours culture and gender in the creative industries, particularly the film industry (Bielby, 2009; Blair, 2001; French, 2014; Jones and Pringle, 2015; Wing-Fai et al., 2015). The literature highlights the norms and expectations of working long hours in the film industry and how the short-term contract nature of the business creates a culture of job insecurity and provides employees with a sense that they are only as good as their last job. The two industries, film and architecture, are similar in that financial funding is determined by awarding fixed-term contracts. For architecture, this usually means that the firm's financial models are built around about billable hours to the client. To be financially competitive, architecture firms quote a price to a client to be awarded the project. This usually means that not enough hours at the higher qualified architect rate are charged to get the project completed to a satisfactory standard. In effect, having employees work extra hours for free is pretty much built into the financial model, and this model means that company employees are expected to work long hours to get the project completed (Boys and Dwyer, 2017; Caven and Astor, 2013; Caven, Navarro-Astor, and Diop, 2016; De Graft-Johnson, Manley, and Greed, 2005; Manley, 2004; Manley and Graft-Johnson, 2013;

Matthewson, 2012; Sang, Dainty, and Ison, 2014; Sarfaraz, Faghih, and Majd, 2014; Scott, 2007; Yadav and Unni, 2016). Overtime and extra pay are practically unheard of. Frank states:

> The director wouldn't think twice about saying we have a big submission tomorrow; at the commercial practice we did things like airports, and you wouldn't have a dialogue about overtime if you had to work till ten o'clock that night to get the package over to the client and so on. I don't think culturally it was particularly brilliant, hmm [trails off].

This embedment of a long-hours culture has been going on for decades, and architects described the culture of some practices as being very hierarchical, with some of the bosses having very regressive characteristics and attitudes. The consensus was that architect firms have limited human resource teams and poor employment practices. This culture of long hours is so embedded in architecture that it even starts at university. The architects interviewed described how even as undergraduate students, they were expected to work late into the evening and at weekends in the department studio to get their assessment projects completed to a high standard, continually working and refining their drawings and models. One of the architects described how he had a friend who was studying English Literature at the same time, and how he did not do anything like the hours he was putting in. This long-hours culture in university is expected and just continues into work practices. As Bertie reflects: *"…so you go to work and there is a lot of just carrying on."* He also described that to secure a role post-graduation in some of the brand name architects in London, there was an expectation that to get the experience and have the 'big architecture practice' name on their CV, they would work not only for free, but for whatever hours were required. He described how some people wanted to get on and had the personalities to push to do it, but others, who wanted to do other things in their lives, in addition to just working for free, declined. There is also the added requirement of being in a position of having a family that can financially support one working in London for free for a significant period. For those who chose this option, or indeed had a family who had the financial resources to support them, it ultimately paid off in terms of progressing vertically up their career ladder. This is a successful strategy for those trainee architects who are ambitious; they get the 'big name' on their CV, and this opens a wide range of opportunities. It is a practice that continues, as students continue to work for free upon graduating; thereby, the spiral of working for no pay (for those who choose to and have a family who can financially support them) is traded off against long-term career gains. Being expected to work long hours, you are doing what you love, for free, and the culture continues to be embedded as the norm. Bertie acknowledges the success of this strategy with perhaps notes of regret and envy in his voice: "…it probably was worth it, some of my friends are now international directors of brand name architects [laughs]."

The extent to which some architecture practices are operating outside current legislation concerning employment practice was highlighted as a major concern in the research undertaken De Graft-Johnson et. al., (2003). The report also identified issues of a complete lack of transparency around pay levels and numbers of women not having written contracts of employment. Some other women who took part in the research reported that they felt that becoming a mother harmed their career, which had previously been going well.

The practitioners interviewed who worked self-employed/freelance were very positive about doing so. They all valued the control and flexibility they had over their own lives and careers. None of them expressed any interest in working for someone else, despite the negative aspects. As previously discussed, they all recognised and mitigated the risk factors of unsure income, no sickness pay, no holiday pay, or other employee benefits, such as workplace pensions. The freelance architects also discussed how they recognised that they were highly unlikely to be awarded big architectural projects as freelancers and would be limited, but not solely confined, to designing domestic house extensions and other smaller-scale projects. Despite all the negative aspects of working freelance, they were very positive about their choice. The architects especially appreciated not having to deal with office politics, bosses with regressive attitudes, and expectations of a long-hours culture. As discussed previously, the participants describe the culture of architecture practices as being very hierarchical and masculine. The senior roles were usually held by males who had gotten to their positions by operating within that culture. Gerald describes one of the architecture practices and the culture in which he worked thus:

> …the bosses were really unpleasant. The staff were nice, even the work was quite nice, but the bosses are, what's the word, regressive characters. Bombastic, deceitful, sexist, homophobic, racist everything completely horrible.

He was enjoying the freedom of working freelance in the way he wanted to operate. The ability to work flexibly was appreciated, especially for those who have caring commitments alongside their work commitments. The practitioner participants who were freelance valued the control they had over their business and were able to be creative and drive the business the way they wanted. Overall, the need for autonomy, control, and flexibility in their work careers was a major driver.

Data show that most of the participants in this study had a range of motivational factors that shaped their careers and entrepreneurial formation. It is plausible to claim that it is this range of factors which acts as push and pull factors for continued motivation as a creative practitioner. Networking is noted as a significant attribute for a career in the creative industries. Data findings indicate that the concept of networking is complex and dependent upon individuals being able to exert social capital and have the personal attitudes and attributes to gain competitive advantages. The notion of exerting social capital is useful in building a professional network, but structural hierarchy means that females are often disproportionately disadvantaged to their male comparators. Opportunities for developing professional networks still operate in male-dominant spaces through male-dominated cultural norms. One of the more positive drivers for a career in the creative industry was to take an opportunity to contribute beyond making a profit in ways that would make a wider contribution to individuals and society. This notion of doing good works by providing social as well as economic contributions to society was a key motivation for many participants. Many of the participants were motivated to go freelance by the opportunity for control, flexibility, and autonomy over their careers. For some participants, going freelance allowed them to escape a corporate, and often unpleasant, work culture.

5.5. Future Career Success and Motivational Factors Student Participants

The results of the student survey, perhaps unsurprisingly, concur with the motivations and identified career success factors of the practitioner participants. The results of the student survey are discussed below. The student questionnaire survey was completed and analysed before the practitioner interviews. Therefore, the findings of the student questionnaire survey were also explored within the semi-structured interviews with the client practitioners.

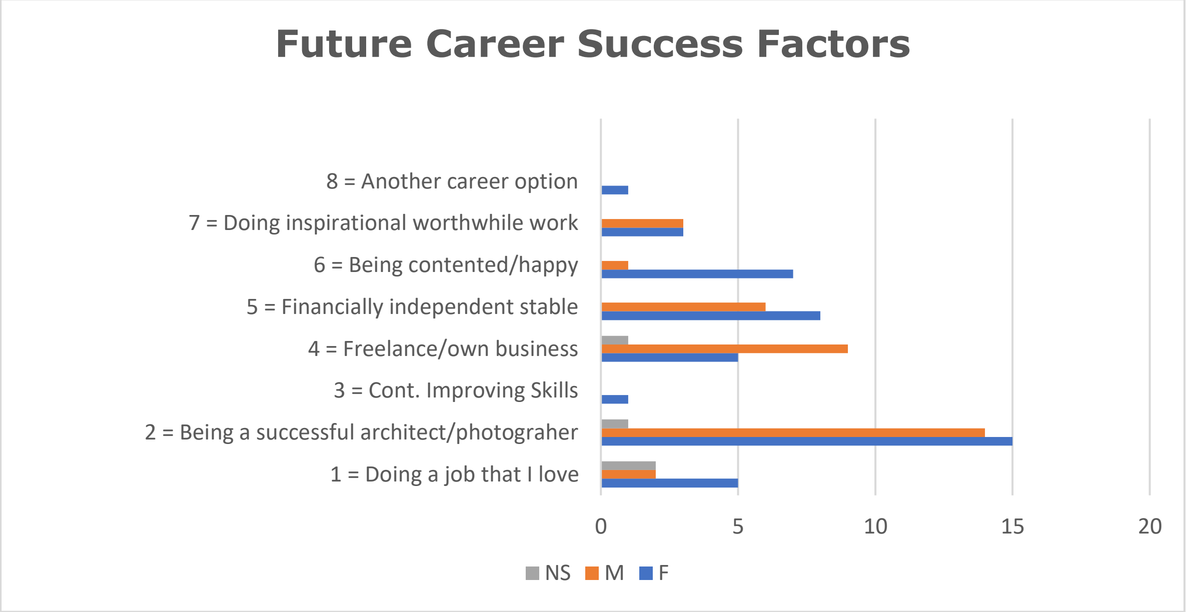

Figure 5.5. Responses to the Open Question: *In your future career what would success look like for you?* Answers are categorised and shown by gender.

In terms of a successful career, the highest response to this question was categorised as being a successful architect/photographer, with a fairly even split between males and females. The results demonstrate a clear affirmation of degree and career choice. This result demonstrates that students choose their degree programme based on their future career aspirations and this, for this group of students at least, is maintained throughout the three years of undergraduate study, noting that this survey was undertaken in their final year of undergraduate study. This result may be aligned to the close link and identification with the industry upon graduation, and different disciplines may show different results. The second highest response reported that the students aspired to run their own business/work freelance, with a much higher proportion of males to females citing this success factor. This result may indicate that the students are aware of and sensitised to the fact that a high proportion of creative industry workers work freelance/self-employed, at least at some point in their career. Future career success being about financial independence and security was the third-largest response, which was an interesting finding, as the students who provided this response discussed having a financially successful career/financially viable business as a key indicator of career success. This response demonstrated a slightly higher proportion of female students in identifying this as a career success factor. Concepts of financial motivations and financial viability were not discussed by the practitioner participants. The next category highlights the importance of being happy/contented, with a higher proportion of female students identifying this as a career success factor. For the students that participated, future career success was measured primarily in terms of finding love and enjoyment in the job itself. Other results include future career success being measured by emotional and altruistic rewards ('doing a job I love’, producing inspirational, worthwhile work, and continuously improving skills).

The results show a wide range of responses from the students in response to the question, *in your future career what would success look like for you*? From these results, there are a range of factors that influence and contribute to career preparation and potential entrepreneurial identity formation with these groups of students. These vary from internal emotional motivating factors to external motivating factors. The internal emotional motivating factors that have been identified are wanting to do a job they love, seeking happiness and contentment, and producing inspirational, worthwhile work. The external motivating factors have been identified as seeking financial independence and stability and having a successful career. The study has identified that career success is a spectrum of both internal emotional motivating factors and external motivating factors. Whilst students may have identified a primary factor in response to answering this question, it is more than probable that each individual will identify career success in their own terms. Even at this stage of their life trajectory and before commencing their careers, a significant number of the students stated that they wanted to have their own business/work freelance (20.24%). This may be due to the students recognising that a high percentage of creatives have their own business/freelance, perhaps by their exposure to their chosen industry through literature, placement, and practitioner contacts, or as advised by their university educators and university careers guidance. The career success drivers are underpinned by the participants' desire to have a creative career, which in turn is underpinned by their sense of creative identity.

5.6. Summary of the chapter

The analysis of the data revealed striking similarities and intersections between the motivational factors of student groups and creative practitioners, indicating a shared motivational framework within the creative industries. Notably, these similarities transcended career stages and specific creative sectors. Common motivational factors encompassed the pursuit of passion, a desire to make positive contributions to individuals and society, and the quest for control, flexibility, and autonomy. This synchronous pattern of motivational drivers underscored a unified ethos among participants, regardless of their creative industry affiliation or career progression.

The trajectory from higher education to becoming a creative practitioner is profoundly influenced by experiences within their creative sector, a process intricately linked to the development of creative and entrepreneurial identities.

Exposure to and engagement with the industry during higher education lays the groundwork for subsequent career experiences. As individuals embark on their professional journeys, a confluence of motivational factors and a sense of their creative self influences their trajectories. The formative phases of creative and entrepreneurial identity are intimately connected, particularly as participants see their creative endeavours transition into commercialised outputs.

The intertwining of creative and entrepreneurial identities becomes evident in the triadic process involving the establishment of creative identity, the transformation of creative output into commercial products, and the recognition of the value—both economic and socio-economic—associated with these outputs. The emergence of entrepreneurial identity aligns closely with the perceived value of their creative contributions. Whether individuals explicitly label themselves as entrepreneurial or exhibit reluctance to adopt such terminology appears to have minimal impact on their creative identity or the monetisation of their creative outputs. The pivotal factor lies in the perceived value generated by their creative endeavours, influencing both their motivational and entrepreneurial behaviours.

5.7 Author's critical reflections

The interview with Donna left an indelible mark on my consciousness, evoking a profound sense of empathy and anger as she recounted the deeply uncomfortable and degrading experiences that she endured at the onset of her architectural career in a London practice. Even after two decades, the rawness in her recollections was palpable, her voice resonating with emotion. At one point, I felt compelled to remind her that she had the agency to abstain from responding to questions that triggered discomfort.

As a woman, the narrative of a young professional like Donna feeling vulnerable, uncomfortable, and degraded in a male-dominated practice stirred my anger. A Critical Realist lens allowed me to analyse how the masculine hierarchical structure (De Graft-Johnson, Manley, and Greed, 2003) within the practice facilitated an environment where such discomfort and degradation could flourish. The experiences recounted by Donna aligned with a broader pattern observed in the female participants' career narratives, illustrating instances of sexist and regressive behaviour. Donna's status as one of the few women and the solitary female among the technical staff brought to light the imbalanced gender dynamics prevalent in that architectural setting. The 'smokers' and 'girly calendars' present in the workplace visually marked the dominance of men, underscoring the deeply rooted gendered nature of the profession. This aligns with the Critical Realist perspective that emphasises analysing how social expectations and norms shape roles and behaviours in professional contexts (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Gergen, 2009). Shifting the focus to female entrepreneurship, a Social Constructionist perspective offers insights into the multifaceted nature of women's entrepreneurial experiences (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Gergen, 2009). Social Constructionism challenges essentialist views of gender and emphasises the socially negotiated nature of concepts like gender (West and Zimmerman, 1987).

In tandem with these personal narratives, I recalled reading a report titled 'Why do women leave architecture' (De Graft-Johnson, Manley, and Greed, 2003). This insightful report delved into the culture prevalent in architecture practices during that period, providing valuable context to the challenges faced by women in the field. The very title of the report, 'Why do women leave architecture,' assumes a departure, rather than exploring the complex dynamics that influence women's decisions to either endure or resist such environments. Reflecting on the interview accounts, I could not help but question whether the focus should shift from why women leave to why, despite the challenges, some choose to persist in architecture.

A gendered critical lens prompts a closer inspection of the narratives surrounding creativity and entrepreneurship. Are there gendered expectations or stereotypes that influence how individuals express their creative and entrepreneurial identities? Are certain types of creativity or entrepreneurial behaviours valorised or marginalized based on gender? The analysis allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities inherent in the formation of creative and entrepreneurial identities. It sheds light on how gendered experiences and societal expectations may intersect with motivational factors, influencing the trajectory from higher education to creative practice. By critically examining the data through a gendered lens, the study can unearth nuances that contribute to a richer, more inclusive narrative surrounding creative and entrepreneurial identity formation within the context of the creative industries. The formation of creative and entrepreneurial identity is extended beyond individual interactions to encompass broader social structures. This acknowledges that societal norms and values are not inherently fixed or universally predetermined but rather evolve as products of ongoing social processes (Burr, 2003).

The study, framed within the philosophy of Critical Realism, accentuates the crucial imperative for creative entrepreneurs to cultivate both business competencies and soft skills, all the while navigating distinct challenges prevalent in the contexts of architecture and photography. Both formal and informal institutions impact the entrepreneurial process, including cultural norms and expectations (Vincent and Wapshott, 2014).

Notably, a significant discrepancy arises in the trajectories of freelance photographers and architects, shaping the nature and timing of their entrepreneurial skill development. Critical Realism posits that social phenomena are concept-dependent, emphasising the need to explore the structured layers and historical contexts (Roundy, Bradshaw, and Brockman, 2018) that contribute to the formation of identities and the perpetuation of social hierarchies.

In the field of photography, freelance practitioners often embark on establishing their businesses immediately after completing their degrees. The more ambitious ones may even engage in commercial work during their studies, laying the foundation for their entrepreneurial endeavours. This immediacy in entrepreneurial engagement accentuates the need for photography students to acquire entrepreneurial skills during their university education. From a Critical Realist perspective, this emphasises the influence of the socio-cultural context and historical structures that shape the choices and opportunities available to individuals in the creative field.

This structural advantage for architecture students also reveals a gendered dimension and underscores the entrenched power structures and cultural norms that contribute to the hierarchical nature of architectural practices. The traditional hierarchy within architectural practices, often dominated by male figures in senior roles, perpetuates patriarchal norms and reinforces the gendered status quo (Wreyford, 2015). This structural inequality is an outcome of the interplay between social structures and the agency of individuals within the field (Connell, 1987).

The hierarchical structure creates a disadvantage for female architects as they contend with a normative culture that tolerates or even expects masculine, aggressive behaviours. Critical Realism allows for an exploration of how structures and agency interact (Acker, 1990), shedding light on how individuals within the architectural field navigate and respond to the prevailing gendered norms. The demanding work hours in architecture exacerbate the challenges for women, particularly if they take time off for childbirth, resulting in disproportionate disadvantages compared to their male counterparts (Lewis et al., 2015). If women choose to leave the field, they face the daunting task of establishing a new business, knowing that major contracts are likely to gravitate toward established, often larger, practices. This creates a double-negative scenario for female architects, limiting their ability to bid for substantial contracts and thus impeding the growth of their businesses. The consequence is often a confinement to smaller-scale projects, frequently within domestic settings.

The experiences of female architects recounted in the study highlight the pervasive sexism within architectural firms. The normative culture, with its entrenched male-dominated hierarchy, may force women to either assimilate into the prevailing masculine norms, accept the gendered hierarchy, or exit the profession altogether. The narrative provides a nuanced understanding of how gendered power structures manifest in everyday interactions within the architectural workplace.

Male architects within the study also acknowledged instances of sexism, indicating a recognition of the issue within the sector. Critical Realism allows for an exploration of how individuals within the field perceive and respond to these power dynamics, offering insights into the potential for change and resistance within the existing structures (Elder-Vass, 2010). It was particularly noteworthy that some male participants expressed strong criticism of macho workplace cultures, indicating that such norms do not universally resonate with all men. This underscores the importance of recognising the broader sociocultural, socioeconomic, and socio-political influences contributing to outcomes, such as the lack of diversity and gendered disparities in the creative industries, particularly in architecture.

In the spirit of reflexive practice (Finlay and Gough, 2003), a critical examination of my positionality as a researcher is imperative to understanding the nuances that may have influenced the data collection process and subsequent analysis. Reflecting on an interview with a male architect in my research journal, I initially perceived him as approachable and liberal, but the conversation revealed an unconscious privilege. In discussing gender bias, he staunchly defended the sector, asserting the absence of sexism in his practice. However, when queried about the ratio of female directors in his previous practice, he acknowledged - after a few moments of reflection - their absence. This highlighted the common tendency to narrowly define sexism as overt bullying, overlooking the subtler ways in which gender biases are ingrained in organisational cultures and structures. The male architect's initial denial of sexism reflects a limited understanding rooted in surface-level experiences. It elucidates how individuals, even with good intentions, may remain oblivious to their privilege and contribute to the reproduction of gendered hierarchies. Critical Realism prompts an exploration of the deeper structures—informal recruitment practices and promotion criteria—shaped by those in power, usually white men in senior positions. The realisation that the culture of the practice had become gender-blind underscores the need to delve beyond overt manifestations of sexism to comprehend the subtler, systemic biases woven into the fabric of the industry.

Engaging in personal critical reflection, it is imperative to acknowledge my value judgment during this interview. By recognising my own biases, I seek to hold myself accountable, emphasising the importance of reflexive practice in qualitative research. This reflexivity is vital for both researchers and industry practitioners, fostering a deeper comprehension of the multifaceted factors influencing gender dynamics and perpetuating disparities in creative fields.

In moments of frustration with this research, I draw inspiration from Donna and other participants who willingly shared their experiences. Their voices deserve amplification, not only for the sake of acknowledging their struggles but also as a catalyst for broader societal conversations on gender equity within the architecture industry. The narratives of these women serve as a call to action, urging a re-evaluation of entrenched structures and a commitment to fostering inclusive environments that empower and retain talented professionals, irrespective of gender.

Chapter Six: Educators in creative disciplines' views on the factors that shape students' entrepreneurial intentions

6.1. Introduction

This is the final of the three findings and discussion chapters, focusing on the third study population, the educators. This chapter is concerned with the educators' experiences and how this has informed their education practice. This chapter is structured as follows: Section 6.2. focuses on the educators' career experiences and their understanding of the industry and culture; Section 6.3. examines the educators' views on how higher education shapes students' entrepreneurial intentions; and Section 6.4. looks at educators' observations of student experiences from a gender perspective.

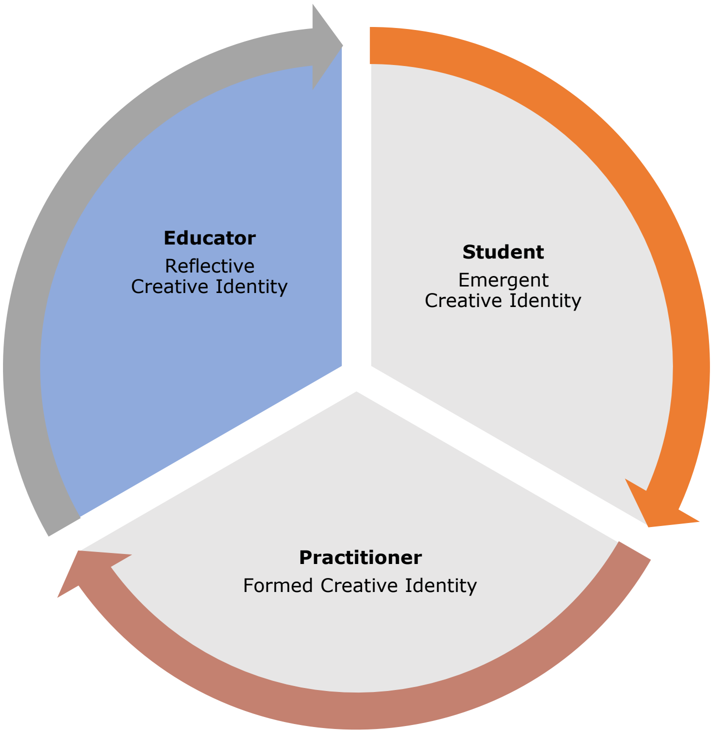
Educator
Reflective
Creative Identity
Student
Emergent
Creative Identity
Practitioner
Formed Creative Identity

Figure 6.1. Domains of reflective creative identity within the journey of a creative discipline educators' career.

6.2 Career experiences and understanding of the sector.

The early career experiences of the two creative sectors discussed in this study differ widely due to the different contexts and career structures in which the participants were operating. Each sector will be discussed separately. In common with a large proportion of creative discipline educators, participants had recent or concurrent industry experience (Carey and Matlay, 2007). All four participants came from a practitioner background and had previous experience working as either an architect or photographer before commencing their role as a university educator. Both photography educators had extensive experience working as freelance photographers before moving to higher education. Both architecture educators had worked for an architecture practice before working in higher education, and neither had worked freelance. The role of creative practitioners has always been recognised within art and design courses but has relatively recently been adopted in entrepreneurship education, with the term 'pracademics' being adopted (Volpe and Chandler, 1999).

Table 6.1. List of participants - higher education university educators

University Location	**Discipline**	**Gender**	**Brief Bio**	**Pseudonym**	**Years in HE**
West Midlands	Photography	Male	Worked as a freelance photographer for over 20 years before moving full-time into teaching in higher education	Henry	<20
East Midlands	Photography	Male	Worked as a freelance photographer for over 5 years before moving full-time into teaching in higher education	Ian	>5
West Midlands	Architecture	Male	Always worked teaching in higher education besides periods of working in practice during part one and part two of the qualification and student placements	James	>5
East Midlands	Architecture	Female	Qualified chartered status worked in practice for less than 5 years before moving full-time into teaching in higher education	Fran	<5

All four educators were able to articulate how their industry experience and knowledge shaped their pedagogic approaches, both in curriculum development and in the advice and guidance provided to students. Given their differing lengths of experience working as creative practitioners and differing career experiences, each educator will be discussed in turn.

6.2.1. Photography Educators’ Career Summaries

Photographer 1 (Henry) worked as a freelance photographer for over twenty years before making a career change to teaching in higher education. His commercial business focused on products, and he provided a photography service for a wide range of companies. He reported that he had a commercial photography business that was financially viable. He explained his success by being technically good but in his view, most significantly, in being able to identify an issue or dilemma, undertake research, and then conceptualise how to come up with an answer to visually resolve the problem. For Henry, the importance of being creative and being able to think laterally was key to being good at visual communication. Secondly, he decided how to stand out and emphasised the importance of becoming your own brand. Henry started his own business when he was twenty and was a ‘punk rocker’. He described his attire as a leather biker jacket, shiny PVC trousers, Doc Martens, a black string vest, and black hair spiked out to the hilt. In this guise, he would meet businesspeople. In his view, the concept of branding and creating a personal brand is key to building a successful creative business: “I almost became a walking, living, breathing brand of myself, who I was. I would go to look at commissions or, apply for commissions or take my portfolio.” This concept of self-branding (Evans, 2017) is something Henry believes to be a key component of his success as a commercial photographer and is a concept he now instils into his students: “I say to students that’s what I did but you can do this for yourself, but in a million and one different guises. Brand yourself, create this mystique around yourself.”

Henry also demonstrates one of the entrepreneurial personality traits, that of being open to managing risk (Karabulut, 2016) and being willing to invest in human and social capital with proactive networking. Creative practitioners are known for their reliance on networking to gain projects, which is a characteristic of creative entrepreneurship (Goodwin, 2019). Henry describes how he would take prospective business clients out for lunch and pay for them, which at the time he could little afford to do financially: "I'd spend say £200 on a Chinese meal to think 'my God what have I done' but I can say 90% of the time, probably more than 90%, it did come back with dividends." He recognised the financial outlay he made was a risk but one he also recognised that, at '90% of the time', was a good commercial decision. This indicates he understands the uncertainty and concept of taking a calculated risk when operating as a creative entrepreneur. For Henry, the importance of self-branding is a key component in being able to stand out and differentiate oneself and what one has to offer (Hooley, 2020). He also emphasised the importance of being creative as the key to good visual communication. Even when working as a commercial photographer, being creative was part of his identity (Goodwin, 2019).

Photographer 2 (Ian) worked as a freelance documentary photographer for less than five years before making a career change to teaching in higher education. Despite a degree in fine art from a prestigious London art college, for him, his work as a photographer is less about the artistic and creative ethos and more focused on using visual communication to convey important messages and raise awareness of issues. He predominately worked for charities and NGOs, mostly on the African continent, and took images both as a record and as a mechanism for providing evidence and raising awareness of human atrocities and cases of social and political injustice: "…the power of the image. Just being advocacy, just being able to direct people's view of something that maybe they have not looked at before and deepen their understanding of it." Ian's approach to his documentary photography is based on a participatory approach. Ian states his remit as a photographer is to deliver projects that emancipate and empower and are very much participatory (Heng, 2017). He would often ask the 'subjects' of the image to photograph the environment they live in, to be an account of the people who live there, by the people who live there, as opposed to the person who has just turned up with the camera: "The idea where you give somebody a camera instead of photographing them and then ask them to show you the situation from their point of view." For Ian, it could be suggested with regards to his freelance photography, work is much more akin to the motivational factors of those people who are classified as social entrepreneurs (Shah, 2020). What motivates him and energises his attention is the idea of photography being used as a tool for good in terms of being an advocate to deepen people's understanding of issues of social and political injustice.

As a course leader, Ian takes this empowering and participatory approach into curriculum development and his pedagogic approach. Ian seeks to create an environment that is as student-led as possible, being more about learning experiences, with less emphasis on tasks that are required to demonstrate the learning happening. In this approach, Ian seeks to achieve a student-centred stance, where students are encouraged to take an experimental approach and use more of a 'learn by doing' way of learning (Arnold and Mundy, 2020): "I try and make sure the elements of the programme that I am responsible for are as hands-on as possible, and the students direct it themselves and take ownership of it." In terms of entrepreneurship, Ian frequently mentions how he is always impressed by the entrepreneurial spirit and entrepreneurial actions he witnesses in various countries in East Africa. He is also impressed by how the local population can start up businesses and seek economic opportunities where there is often very little in the way of finance. In essence, this is an entrepreneurship born out of necessity (Corrêa et al., 2020). Given that Ian has frequently worked in countries that have very unstable political systems, he has often found himself in risky situations despite working under NGO protection systems: "…last time their [NGOs] security protocols were really good. So, it'll be good but the prospect of being kidnapped and tortured frightens me, more than being killed, to be honest." This willingness to potentially put his life at risk to do a job that Ian expressed he loves indicates his willingness to take on risk. The motivational forces around his desire to put a spotlight on social and political injustice mean that he is prepared to take on an aspect of managed risk.

In terms of gender, both the photography lecturers are male, and therefore their views and experiences are formed from this gendered perspective. It was difficult to know whether their experiences and narratives would be different if they were female.

6.2.2. Architecture Educators’ Career Summaries.

Architect 1 (James) graduated with a Master's degree in Architecture and Part 2 Architect professional qualification over ten years ago. At the point of his graduation, the UK was experiencing a recession within the construction industry, and he failed to secure a job in an architects' practice, which would have enabled him to gain the additional professional practice experience required to obtain his chartered architect status. The architecture industry is uniquely tied to the fate of the construction industry (Salvatierra et al., 2019). This differentiates it from other creative disciplines, as it is so economically dependent on the economic performance of another industry. During this period, his former tutor obtained a role as Head of Architecture at a higher education institution and asked James if he would be interested in undertaking some part-time paid teaching while he was looking for work. He took this opportunity and taught for a few months before applying for and securing the full-time teaching role at the higher education institution where he now works. Therefore, James’ experience differs from the other three educators interviewed for the study, as his experience of working as a creative entrepreneur is more limited, both in time and scope. He recognises this limitation also provides a catalyst for providing greater insights into how different people can have different career journeys and aspects of that experience, in terms of planned outcomes and original goals, which can change over time. James discusses how students rarely hear about practising architects' whole career journeys, as visiting guest lecturers tend to only talk about their projects, their investigations, and their success. As James states, “… they never talk about their career the whole way through and the barriers and difficulties they faced along the way.” For James, being successful in a career is a combination of factors, including timing and having access to job opportunities, which can include geographical location (most architecture practices are in big cities) and, above all, resilience. He discusses how he is open and candid in sharing his own experiences with students to present to them the challenges they may face once they graduate from their undergraduate degree: “The role I have in this is that I can present the challenges they may face out there back to the students, whereas if I was working somewhere else, I wouldn’t be able to”. James also hopes it helps the students relate better to the people who teach them.

James discussed how he feels that the undergraduate degree programme that he leads is very geared up to securing placement opportunities for students. He also discussed how it provides the students with a lot of support and how that support needs to be targeted and structured. The university has established a wide network of placement opportunities over the years. James has been proactive in widening placement opportunities for both Year 2 and Year 3 students. This is largely down to his own experience and the career journey he experienced:

> That background that I mentioned when I graduated was formative because I had to do it on my own, so you find your own path. I think you need to be more structured in the support and proactive, not just leave it to chance. (James)

As James’ career did not have the straightforward journey which took him from one point to the endpoint he originally planned, this has provided a catalyst for ensuring a more positive experience for the students on the degree programme he now leads. It also allows him to reflect a narrative to the students that career journeys can be full of challenges and setbacks to provide a realistic view of the sector’s environment.

Architect 2 (Fran) is a chartered architect and has worked in two different architecture practices over five years. Whilst she was in practice, she also worked one day per week at the university where she works now as a practitioner lecturer. She left the practice to undertake a PhD full-time but continued to teach part-time. She describes the transition from practice to full-time education to be gradual, as she had always combined her time in practice with teaching at university. Due to the demands of being both full-time and the undergraduate programme lead, there is little opportunity for Fran to undertake any practice work. Fran comments that she misses architecture practice and aims to combine both at some point: "I still enrol every year as an ARB member because I know I want to try and go back to it and balance both at some point. I do miss it. [laughs/sighs]."

Fran reported that she had always taught whilst in practice and that she enjoyed teaching and supporting students' transition to their professional careers. It was this driver that shaped her decision to undertake a full-time PhD and make the transition from practice to full-time academia. Fran discussed how she enjoyed her time in practice and never found that her gender was an issue with her career progression. This was a point she was keen to emphasise. Although she was not asked the question directly, she wanted to convey that her own experiences in practice were not shaped by her gender: "The gender thing, the two practices I worked in were fairly evenly balanced in terms of gender, so I don't see it as this male-dominated world." Fran's views and her experiences of being in those two practices shaped her view of architecture as not being a 'male-dominated world'. Her experience of the culture was not shared by the responses of the female students of this cohort. The responses to the open question and Likert statement about whether their gender would influence their career demonstrated strong concerns articulated by the female architecture students (see Section 4.5.1.). The data demonstrated that some of the students made comments that anticipated their female gender would negatively shape their careers in terms of equal pay and career opportunities. The female architecture students also expressed concerns over their industry's culture as being male-dominated, traditional, and hierarchical. These concerns were not shared by their year group leader in terms of her views and experience in the practice of the industry's culture. A report from RIBA, *Close the Gap* (10 April 2019), examining the gender pay gap data for 2018 reports that the pay gap remains above 15% at UK architecture firms. In addition, women make up 50% of the entrance to Schools of Architecture but hold only 20% of senior roles in practice. Therefore, it could be suggested that the students are more inclined to have an opinion on the matter of the gender imbalance of architectural practices than Fran.

Fran reflected that she found undertaking the route to becoming a chartered architect had aspects of entrepreneurship: *"…being an architect… you have to be in charge of your own time, your projects, quite entrepreneurial, and doing an architecture degree and masters sets you up for that."* It was these skills that Fran found most helpful when she undertook her PhD, and she now seeks to embed them into the course by making project management and time management skills part of the curriculum.

6.2.3. Summary of the educators' careers

In examining the educators' career experiences and the factors influencing their decision to transition into educators, Critical Realism and gender theory offer valuable lenses through which to interpret the complexities involved.

Critical Realism encourages an exploration of the underlying structures and causal powers shaping educators' career choices, highlighting the importance of social context (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). By delving into their motivators and drivers, it becomes apparent that entrepreneurial behaviours are multifaceted and influenced by both internal and external factors which provide the opportunity to shape the values and ethics of how they will run their business (Scarborough and Cornwall, 2018). The educators' decisions to become freelance creative practitioners and, subsequently, educators, reflect not only personal aspirations but also systemic influences within the creative industries by developing a portfolio of skills and contacts (Porfirio, Carriho, and Monico, 2016). Critical Realism aids in unravelling the intricate interplay between individual agency and the broader structures that shape career trajectories, recognising the role of human agency in shaping outcomes (Fletcher, 2012). The educators explain how they shaped their careers through a combination of skills, competencies, hard work, 'luck', and understanding of the sectors within which they are working. To achieve their career goals, the educators engendered human agency to navigate the broader structures that shape career trajectories.

The study contributes a nuanced perspective by examining how gendered expectations and societal norms may intersect with educators' entrepreneurial behaviours (West and Zimmerman, 1987). The self-identified aspects of their careers and behaviours that they deem entrepreneurial can be scrutinised through a gendered lens (Connell, 2002). For example, willingness to take on perceived risks and the ability to work autonomously, often associated with entrepreneurialism, may be influenced by gendered expectations and societal norms. Exploring how gender dynamics intersect with entrepreneurial behaviours adds depth to the analysis, acknowledging that experiences and choices are situated within broader socio-cultural contexts (Welter and Smallbone, 2008).

6.3. The role of higher education in shaping entrepreneurial intentions

The next section discusses findings concerning the role of higher education in shaping student entrepreneurial intentions. Following the analysis, themes were identified which are expanded on further below.

6.3.1. Design and structure of the curriculum in shaping student creative entrepreneurial outcomes

The study delved into the design and structure of the curriculum to assess its impact on shaping student entrepreneurial outcomes. Across the examined degree programs, there existed two main approaches: standalone professional practice modules and integration of professional practice within existing modules. These modules are specifically tailored to equip students with employability skills essential for their future careers, aligning with the increasing emphasis on fostering employability within creative discipline programs (Jackson and Tomlinson, 2019).

The drive to equip students with employability skills is part of the national agenda, including initiatives from The Higher Education Academy (HEA) (Higher Education and National Endowment for Science, 2007). All degree programmes follow a design principle that concentrates on employability skills under the HEA agenda in papers such as ‘Embedding Employability in Higher Education’. This includes concepts such as student-centred curriculum and student-co-designed curriculum based upon student feedback. The intention is to provide a curriculum that engenders and encourages students to be more enterprising, recognising the need for this within the creative industries environment (Hesmondhalgh, 2013). These professional practice modules and professional practice components within the curriculum take many forms, including forging links and networks with practitioners, developing their portfolios following feedback from a practitioner, creating their curriculum vitae and personal websites as part of their personal brand, and contacting practitioners in the area that the student wishes to work in for career guidance and networking. This approach has been developed in recognition of the fact that many students will work freelance at least at some point in their careers. This is especially true for photography students. As Henry states: “The other thing is ‘where are the jobs, where are the photography jobs?’ You work for yourself, working for a company as a photographer more or less doesn’t exist anymore.” The need to be able to work freelance, be able to network, and have what is often referred to as a protean career (Herrmann, Hirschi, and Baruch, 2015) is understood by educators and experienced in their careers. As James illustrates: “It [professional practice module] was set up initially as a live project module to give them that live experience but, it has involved into something interdisciplinary or, trans-disciplinary at some point.” As underpinned by the above quote, this aspect of curriculum design aims to provide students with a simulated ‘live’ experience of what it is like to work in their chosen field. The purpose is to develop the understanding, knowledge, and skills needed to work as a creative practitioner. The evolution of the module towards an interdisciplinary approach provides students with a taster of what it is like to work as a creative entrepreneur as part of a linked multi-disciplined network on projects. The quote below from Fran illustrates how educators are acutely aware of the need to teach beyond the confinement of a narrow, subject-based curriculum and teach key work-related skills:

> …going through time management techniques, giving them little calendars which I developed myself for my PhD, so going through their time and how they might divide up their time. Breaking down the projects and only two pieces of coursework instead of three. That kind of stuff we are teaching them and explaining why we are doing it as well.

Fran highlights that for students to work as creative entrepreneurs in their chosen field requires more than an application of technical skills and creative ability. They must also be able to apply and navigate their way to develop a career in a complex, unstructured environment. According to Frank (2007), the factors that distinguish the difference between entrepreneurial skills and work-related skills are that entrepreneurial skills are more akin to aptitude and behaviours. The definition by Gibb (1987, p. 6) is that an entrepreneur is an individual demonstrating a marked use of enterprising attributes, such as 'initiative, persuasive powers, moderate risk-taking, creativity, independence, problem-solving, need for achievement, imagination, leadership, hard work and internal locus of control.' The curriculum is designed to equip students with work-related and professional skills. Entrepreneurial skills are either part of the students' inherent character and/or formed by other factors such as self-directed assessments, role models, and work placement opportunities.

6.3.2. Assessment techniques

As discussed in Chapter Two, assessment techniques include those that are designed to mirror client/practitioner relationships. Most creative discipline degree courses assess student attainment levels through coursework. This takes the form of a range of projects, portfolios, and degree shows. These assessment practices are assessed by both academics and practitioner guest lecturers. This aspect of the program is designed to assess not just students' technical and creative skills but also their ability to work autonomously, be self-directed, and follow a project brief. Students are often either given a project brief, select a pre-prepared one from a list, or develop their own ideas, often in collaboration with others:

> There'll be design studio projects that last anything from two to three weeks. By the time they get into the final year, it's a 22-week project, so they gradually get lengthier, and more complex as they go through the course. (Fran)

The assessment techniques used within creative discipline courses are frequently self-directed and therefore could be suggested to mirror entrepreneurial endeavours. Guest practitioners both teach and assess students' work throughout their degree programmes to ensure they have exposure to industry requirements early on in their careers. It also provides a networking opportunity for students and people working within the industry. This occurred frequently across all four departments that participated in the study. The point is made by James: "For all the design studios modules over the three years we get practising architects coming in as formal visiting tutors, but they are under the jurisdiction of the year or module leader."

As discussed in Section 6.3.1 above, students are also required to undertake a range of activities that are designed to support the development of their wider professional skills. The professional skills aim to run alongside the development and assessment of the students' technical skills and creativity. An element of both the design of the curriculum and the assessment strategy is to encourage and enable student opportunities for working across their discipline, as well as working with others, both within their discipline and in areas related to their discipline:

> As part of the learning outcomes and the teaching process, we have a section on the learning outcomes called collaboration and enterprise. This is where during projects we encourage students to make outside connections as part of the module. For example, they can work with graphic designers, illustrators, typographers, and people that they can collaborate with (Henry)

The concept behind such opportunities is to support shaping students' career intentions and to better equip them, not just with a range of skills that would be required for their future career, but also to develop the attitudes required to put their ambitions into action. Henry continues: "That is not just fulfilling that part of the learning outcome for the assessment but also trying to engender this entrepreneurial spirit in the students." This endeavours to create an environment that replicates the creative industry and the skills and behaviours required to successfully navigate one's way through the hierarchical framework.

6.3.3. The role of external practitioners

External practitioners contribute to the student learning experience through a range of mechanisms, including providing guest lectures, career advice, technical advice, supporting creativity, and evaluating both formative and summative assessments. Their role provides a useful insight into industry culture and requirements for the students, as well as providing opportunities for forging contacts within the industry. This provides an opportunity for the students' learning experience to be enhanced by gaining a range of advice and guidance from a wider number of people. James states: "These external clients, they are effectively acting as facilitators for the students to gain new learning experiences." From the perspective of the educators, the role of external practitioners provides useful support in delivering an enhanced curriculum, as well as practical support with a range of activities such as assessments and student career advice. They can complement the core delivery of the curriculum, as well as provide advice to enhance the delivery and assessment of the course based on their own experience. One of the educators, Ian, stated that he found that the role of the practitioners often provided an opportunity for students to hear the career experiences of a more diverse group of people, in terms of socio-economic backgrounds, gender, ethnicity, and careers in different sectors within the industry: "We try and get a range of practitioners in, so we fit students to them, that way the whole cohort gets to present their portfolio to someone." Ian said that continued constraints on their departmental budget meant that they were no longer able to fund as many guest lecturers to support the programme as they had previously. This, he had concerns about, as he felt it was of great benefit to the students' experience of the course. This theme was also discussed by Henry, who felt that the role of guest lecturers often provided a context and narrative. If this narrative provides a context and narrative that students could relate to, then they were more likely to feel that they could learn something from it in terms of their future careers. Henry states: "They think, this is a true event and maybe if something like that happens to me in the future, I can adapt that strategy or just listen to his experience and work along those lines." Overall, the involvement of practitioners was considered beneficial to the staff and students.

6.3.4. Preparing students for their future career

The educators discussed how their own industry experience made them acutely aware of the need to ensure that the course helped prepare students for their future careers. This was provided by the structure of the curriculum in terms of providing opportunities for developing creative and technical skills and knowledge, along with opportunities for developing professional practice skills. The educators also provided practical advice to students, such as how to approach prospective clients:

> We split the year up, take five students at a time, and actually help them with their first point of contact. So, we sit down with them and say, right, let's research a list of people for you to get in touch with either for work or to have a conversation. I'll help you with that, get the tone of voice right, etc, and how to get yourself across. (Ian)

As Ian goes on to discuss, some of this is more tacit knowledge (Ribeiro, 2013) around the tone of voice and not being too formal, whilst still remaining professional. As he acknowledges, some of this tacit knowledge has been gained over a long period, in part due to personality and behavioural traits, and is therefore very difficult to 'teach'.

There are opportunities for work placements, especially for architecture students, who can spend several weeks in a practice gaining professional experience and knowledge. Work placements can either form part of the students' summative assessment or be more informal mechanisms for gaining work experience. This can provide invaluable experience for students, as highlighted in Chapter Five. Course leaders were keen to remark that there is a lot of support for students in securing work placements. The driver for the university is not altogether altruistic and is solely in the students' interest. Whilst there are benefits for the students, the drive for placements is underpinned by the changing nature of university funding mechanisms and the need for meeting targets and preserving a reputation for supporting students in workplace readiness. James comments: "Partly, that is to do with the changing nature of H.E. and not necessarily the targets that we have to hit, but we are very conscious of matrix and how that affects the reputation of the place."

It is not just the practice placements that provide opportunities for students to find out more about a wide range of work opportunities. Henry discussed how he often invited alumni students into the department to give talks to current students about their careers and the role they are currently doing. Henry commented that due to the vast changes in technology, these alumni students are doing jobs that did not even exist when he was a student. Whilst they may not be working as a traditional photographer, with the increased use of images and CGI, these former students are nevertheless working in the visual arts. He commented that he felt this enabled the current students to recognise that there are potential opportunities beyond the immediate horizon. This, he felt, helped the students to be more future-focused and wider in looking at creative career opportunities. Fran discussed the wide range of events and opportunities available to students in the architecture degree programme at the university where she works. These include events sponsored by practices and opportunities for students to present and showcase their work to practitioners. As Fran noted, whilst there is a wide range of opportunities available, these are always taken up by students who are very engaged and are motivated by the perceived benefits, not necessarily by all students. From the interviews with the creative practitioners, it appeared from the narrative they provided about their university experience that they were very forthcoming in taking up an opportunity that was open to them whilst studying and were highly motivated to achieve their best work and grades. Therefore, there appears to be a correlation between students who are highly motivated and active in taking up opportunities and how this translates into a creative career.

6.4. Views of their role as educators of future creative entrepreneurs

Within the semi-structured interviews, the educators discuss their views on the concept of creative entrepreneurs and how they supported and shaped student career outcomes.

6.4.1. The role of educators in supporting and shaping student career outcomes

All four educators discussed how their experience within their creative industry was fraught with challenges and barriers. They considered that an aspect of their role was to make the students aware of the difficulties they may face when establishing themselves in their chosen careers, especially at the start of their careers. This was done not to sway or deter students from entering a career in the creative industry but to better prepare them for the potential challenges ahead:

> I'll be honest and say it's a really competitive industry and it can be really difficult to navigate your way through but crucially, it's not impossible. (Ian)

Educators are aware that gaining a footing on the first rung of the career ladder within the creative industries is the most challenging. The first part of the students' career journey is the most difficult, as they have very few, if any, contacts and have yet to establish a name for themselves to build their portfolio and personal brand. In addition to industry experience shaping the guidance offered by educators to students, they are also aware of other differences between their experience and those of their students. In the below extract, James is describing the differences he perceives between his situation as an undergraduate student, the situation students may be in from other universities, and the 'typical' nature of the students in the course he now teaches. He describes the differences as a range of factors, such as their geographical location having an impact on opportunities available, different family backgrounds, and how most of them live at home:

> …they are not surrounded by the same opportunities that I was. We try and make sure all students have opportunities. (James)

This may indicate that James is aware of the amount of social capital that is required to become an architect. He is asserting that the opportunities for advancement in the sector are not equal for everyone and that a range of structural factors, such as social-economic factors, can help or hinder a person's career.

The educators in the study were aware of the changes to creative careers, including how technological changes can impact creative careers through both their networks and contacts with their student alumni.:

> There are two things, he is not a photographer, but he is working in the visual arts or visual medium, and secondly, he is working in an industry in a role that didn’t exist when he got his degree. (Henry)

This wider perspective of the changing shape of their sector provides a platform to support and help shape students’ ideas around potential future careers. Providing a narrative around the changes and opportunities for future careers, or potential career options, engenders a habit of horizon scanning, being future-focused, and always being proactive in seeking new opportunities. Often, being aware and in touch with current trends and future developments within their creative industry is an aspect of the role educators find enjoyable. Like the other educators interviewed, Henry spoke with a degree of pride about the achievements of former students on the course. This awareness of the changing nature of creative careers can also mean that, to some extent, educators either knowingly or inadvertently provide an aspect of shielding students against some of the more mundane, less attractive elements of the role. In the below extract, Fran discusses her experience in practice and how the role of an architect is often focused on project management. She describes how a significant part of the role is ensuring that the design passes the necessary approvals and checks and is built and completed. In terms of time, the design of often only a small aspect and often one that is done by another colleague:

> More and more the architect's job is just about project management. Someone else does the designing, actually. We don't actually tell our students that though because we don't want them to lose the passion about design. (Fran)

As highlighted in both Chapters Four and Five, having a sense of passion and doing a role that you love are often primary motivators for a creative career. The concept of students having a passion for their subject and being 'hungry' for success to make it happen was a theme that reoccurred throughout the interviews with the educator participants. In the extract below, you can almost hear Henry's frustrations as he tries to articulate how he seeks to motivate students into being proactive in starting their creative careers:

> I keep saying to the students, 'go out and network you won't get anything just come to you. Whatever you want to do in life entrepreneurially it is never ever going to land in your lap by sitting there, you have to get out, you have to forage, you have to hunt for work and once you have found it you have to make it work. That's the way, you've got to be hungry.' (Henry)

Noting the language used by Henry in the above extract, he uses terms such as '*get out*', '*forage*', '*hunt*', '*make it work*' and '*be hungry*'. This language is quite descriptive of primitive man in that one is being driven by a sense of survival. This echoes the findings of the study by Farny et al. (2016), where they examined the masculine language in course literature. Yet, being 'hungry' and 'make it work' are also terms often used in descriptors of the behaviours of entrepreneurs. As Henry notes, this approach does not motivate students en masse:

> Whether that works or not I don't know, I usually see rows of blank faces when I say that, but we do have students who take that on board and are out there.

This highlights an age-old question when discussing entrepreneurial behaviour as to whether these few students would be behaving like this anyway, with or without external influences (Muñoz-Bullón, Sánchez-Bueno and Vos-Saz, 2015) such as Henry’s motivational speeches. There is a strong theme developed from the data that suggests these drivers of passion and love for the subject, alongside the sense of creative identity, are the strongest motivational factors for success (Blair, 2001) and subsequently are the drivers for entrepreneurial behaviours.

6.4.2. University environment shaping student entrepreneurial intentions

The university environment helps support and nurture student entrepreneurial intentions by providing a range of course opportunities for the students to present and showcase their work, thereby replicating client/practitioner relations, as well as putting into action the modelling and the narrative they received from the educators. In essence, they are emulating the educators’ advice based on their experience.

In this first extract below, Henry is discussing how in his view the entrepreneurial aspect has come more and more into the student domain. This, he feels, is due to a combination of his own and other academic colleagues' experiences of being self-employed, and the changes to the higher education environment, in terms of higher student numbers and the introduction of student fees. He remarks that the increase in student numbers has led to a situation where more than half of the students on the course say that they are not interested in a career in the visual arts. Instead, they chose the course because they thought they needed a degree to gain access to a jobs market, whereby they could access graduate-level jobs with a higher level of responsibility and income. This presents challenges to both the course delivery and its ethos:

> So we are left with this crossroads which I think is problematic. In the past, you trained in a vocation to be part of that vocation. This 50% of students are on the course, their main aim is to get a degree with no interest in the

> vocation we are supposed to be teaching them. Which I think is really interesting, but I think that is purely because of the student numbers. (Henry)

This factor, if accurate, leads to the following question: if students have little interest in the subject being taught, how can this sense of passion and love of the subject be nurtured within them? From both the interviews with practitioners and the students who responded to the survey, the results indicated that the sense of passion for being creative and love of the subject either drove, or was a factor in driving, their career. The locus of control is the entrepreneurial intention or entrepreneurial behaviours (Rauch and Frese, 2007; Brockhaus and Horwitz, 1986; Hansemark, 1998; Mueller and Thomas, 2000). Without this, there remains a question: besides the motivation to gain a university degree, what is driving those groups of students, who have little interest in the subject they are studying, towards exhibiting entrepreneurial intentions in gaining work in that field?

In terms of the delivery of course content, most universities use a series of lectures. These are usually delivered in a traditional format in large rooms to high numbers of students. Whilst this may be economical in terms of delivering material to a high volume of students, there are questions as to whether this is the best approach in terms of engaging the students pedagogically (Exley and Dennick, 2004; French and Kennedy, 2017). Fran discussed whether this delivery method was dated and was seeking ways to change the course for more teaching without lectures:

> …all of our lectures are recorded so students have low attendance, they don’t turn up, they can listen to it online, then they forget so they don’t really do it. Are they really learning everything they are supposed to be learning?

The matter of students seeing a degree as a series of tasks to be completed with a definitive outcome (the award of a degree) was discussed by Ian. He commented that students do not always recognise the degree process as being experiential and around the learning experience. Although he has only been teaching in higher education for four years, he said he has noticed a real change in student attitudes and expectations during that time:

> … in terms of being taught specific tasks and taught specific assignments rather than see it as an experiential process which is really important that they understand, the task is there to prove the learning as happened, it's not the learning itself. The actual assessment is secondary to the learning experience. (Ian)

The concept of the entrepreneurial architect was discussed by James. His university ran an initiative that was designed to encourage more new enterprises to be set up by their graduates. He was explaining the initiative to an external examiner:

> He was questioning why is it only entrepreneurial in setting up new practices, can't you be entrepreneurial in existing practices? Which is an interesting point that has stuck with me. (James)

He described how he reflected on this comment and noted that within the city where he works, there is a bit of 'mono-culture' in the work that architecture practices produce. They tend to be very similar to one another. There is not as full a range of work that emerges from these companies as there could be. That is for a variety of reasons, not just down to them, but rather relies on clients, planning policies, and so on. He then started to question how they could upskill their graduates so they can challenge the norms when they go into these practices. James discussed how that stayed with him for a while:

> …but now I think we need to give our graduates the confidence to set up on their own. Not architecture practices per se, but creative opportunities and having that drive.

James' reflections led him to the conclusion that to be more of an entrepreneur, architecture students need both the 'confidence' to set up on their own, as well as the freedom to not just set up architecture practices per se, but also to develop creative opportunities. There appears, therefore, to be a combination of confidence and creative freedom in being considered an entrepreneurial architect.

6.5. Educators’ observations of student experiences from a gender perspective

The educators were asked questions about their perceptions of their students from a gender perspective in the semi-structured interviews. Of note, the educators in architecture were much more reluctant to discuss gender. This is interesting, as generally there is much more discourse on architecture and gender than there is for photography. Certainly, there was a marked difference in the responses to the topic of gender between the female architecture students and female photography students within the study’s questionnaire survey (see Chapter Four). Below is a summary of the discussion with the educators.

In terms of role models in the four different university departments across the three universities that participated in the study, there was a higher percentage of males teaching on the degree programmes. This factor was discussed in two of the interviews. Ian referred to the fact that out of eight members of staff who teach in their photography degree programme, two were female. He noted that whilst they have higher numbers of female students on their degree programme, within the industry, there are higher numbers of men. It was something he noted and wanted to actively address, although he did not know how he could actively address the imbalance of gender within their staffing:

> That is something that I, as a programme leader, would very much like to address. I don’t know where we stand legally in terms of positive bias, but I would like us to have more of an even mix. (Ian)

The evidence that having female role models in terms of senior female staff as a positive encouraging force for empowering female students is inconclusive (Wöllner and Ginsborg, 2011):

> The only area of concern, because an external examiner bought it up last year, was that in our second-year team our regular staff including external practitioners in the second year, are all male. The external examiner said to me, 'How do you feel about the whole second-year team being male?' I'd not even thought about it, hadn't even crossed my mind, I don't know why that was, but I'd not even noticed. (Fran)

Fran not noticing the lack of second-year female teaching staff could indicate that male dominance of teaching staff (Smith, 2008) in architectural degree programmes is the norm and therefore not something that would be noticeable. Often, women inadvertently reinforce gendered stereotypes, suggesting internalised sexism by using gendered language and accepting gendered stereotype roles unquestioningly (Bell and Burkley, 2014). The concept of unconscious bias (Fiarman, 2016) here may play out in not being aware of the bias towards male domination within the teaching staff on the course, as this was generally the norm and therefore not notable, in effect becoming gender blind (Jones, Marlow and Martinez Dy, 2014) to the prevailing gender imbalance among teaching staff.

The photography educators discussed how changes in the technology aspect of photography had meant more female students were going into the studio. Henry talked about how ten years or so ago, he had observed that because preparing for a studio shoot involved setting up flashlights, props, and sets, this was seen as a 'man thing' and was very much the domain of the male students:

> …I remember actively encouraging the women students to get into the studio. Because men tend to look at things in a very sexualised way, especially fashion. I encouraged more women to get into the studio, especially fashion because they look at it in a different way, they look at it in a more poignant, artistic way. (Henry)

Henry continues this discussion by referring to how things have changed for the better and students are attracted to studio work because they are interested in studio photography, such as fashion, and there is no longer a gendered difference. It is to be noted that Henry’s aim of encouraging more female students to work in the studio, particularly fashion, is not driven by a wish to see a more even gender balance, although there is an element of this, but because he believes that the female students produce more artistic images. However, it could also be suggested that here Henry himself is stereotyping by generalising this way of thinking based on gender alone, despite his stated efforts to the contrary.

Ian's observation of gender differences regarding technology usage reveals an interesting dynamic within the student cohort. He noted that male students often exhibit a more hands-on approach, showing a willingness to experiment and try new technologies independently. In contrast, female students tend to prefer seeking guidance and relying on formal instruction when engaging with technology.

Interestingly, Ian highlighted that despite the initial confidence displayed by male students, it was often the female students who demonstrated a deeper understanding of the technology after taking the time to learn and comprehend it thoroughly. This suggests that while male students may demonstrate initial confidence, female students' methodical approach leads to a more comprehensive grasp of the technology in the long run.

Moreover, Ian pointed out that male students who exude confidence tend to perform well academically and transition successfully into their careers post-graduation. This observation underscores the importance of confidence and assertiveness in navigating both academic and professional realms:

> Then you get the boys who are really confident but are not willing to back it up with actually grafting. They usually end up doing okay which is frustrating because they have never really applied themselves. This rarely happens the other way around, a gender trait, usually a certain type of young man. (Ian)

It could be argued that both Henry and Ian are basing their judgments on simplistic notions of binary male and female comparators, often with females at the disadvantage and thereby needing extra 'help', which in turn affords privilege and visibility to the notion that men are the exemplar entrepreneurial subjects (Ahl and Marlow, 2012, 2019).

Fran did not perceive any gender differences within the student cohorts. She had noted other differences between student groups in terms of ethnicity, which they were trying to address within the degree programme. Around the time of the interview, this university was running a series of focus groups and other initiatives to find out how they could better support all groups:

> No, there is no noticeable difference [in terms of gender]... I notice more of a difference between white and BME, there is definitely a difference there between aspirations and attitudes. So BME are probably not as aspirational as the white students, not all of them... (Fran)

The interplay of gender and race highlights the intersectional perspective and emphasises that individual experiences are not shaped by a singular factor but rather by the dynamic interplay of multiple social structures and systems of oppression (Cho et al., 1990). The example above demonstrates that whilst Fran has noticed a difference between white and BME students' aspirations and attitudes, the intersectional interplay of gender and race is not recognised. As Fran noted later in this discussion, though she and other colleagues had observed differences in attitudes and aspirations amongst student groups in terms of ethnicity, she had not observed more general differences in terms of gender. Murdoch and McAloney-Kocaman (2019) discuss how evidence of white privilege status is based upon a society that is formed by policies, practices, and institutions formed by white, European values. Higher education institutions are part of UK society and therefore support white privilege and tacit knowledge, which allows for greater self-confidence (Bhopal and Pitkin, 2020).

6.6. Summary of the chapter

This chapter delved into the perspectives of educators in creative disciplines regarding their influence on student entrepreneurial outcomes. The study revealed that educators' prior experience in the creative industry significantly shaped their pedagogical approach and career guidance. Their industry knowledge enabled them to provide practical advice on navigating the creative sector, client recruitment, managing expectations, and self-branding.

At an institutional level, higher education institutions play a multifaceted role in supporting students' entrepreneurial aspirations. This included curriculum design focusing on student-centred learning and embedded professional practice components, assessment techniques mirroring real-world client relationships, and practitioner involvement providing industry insights and networking opportunities.

Educators emphasised the importance of students' awareness of industry challenges, future trends, and seizing opportunities. They encouraged students to be proactive, future-focused, and hungry for success. However, not all students exhibited the same drive, highlighting the educators' role in fostering confidence and motivation.

Reflecting on the findings, it becomes apparent that higher education educators may inadvertently perpetuate gender stereotypes and social disadvantages. For instance, overlooking gender imbalances in staffing profiles and using language associated with masculinity in describing successful entrepreneurs may reinforce existing gender biases and hinder female students' opportunities for success.

In conclusion, there is a need for higher education educators to critically engage with gendered narratives in creative entrepreneurship. By challenging gender stereotypes and fostering inclusive learning environments, educators can empower all students to pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations regardless of gender, thus promoting social equity and diversity within the creative industries.

6.7 Author’s critical reflections

Engaging in reflexive practice (Finlay and Gough, 2003), I reflect on how my positionality influenced the data collection process and subsequent analysis. The striking disparity between Fran's confident assertions of gender equality in architecture and the concerns voiced by female students in the survey prompted a deeper exploration into the factors shaping students' perceptions of the sector. Fran's assertion that there are no barriers to female progression contradicted the female students' anticipation of negative impacts on their careers due to the gender pay gap and male dominance. This prompted me to question the influences on students' perspectives, examining the potential role of tutors or external factors. Upon discovering that Fran had not noticed the absence of female teaching staff in the second year of the course, I experienced a sense of astonishment. This led me to contemplate the concept of gender blindness, where male educators are perceived as the established norm in a male-dominated sector, rendering female staff absence less noticeable (Bagilhole, 2002; Cooper, 2019; Grove, 2013). This realisation prompted personal reflection on how deeply ingrained societal norms and expectations can contribute to such oversights.

During Fran's interview, I made a deliberate choice not to confront her with the survey findings, aiming to capture her unfiltered views. Her later mention of a women's achievements conference and reluctance to overly promote such events sparked reflection on power dynamics. Adopting a Foucauldian approach (Day, 2012), I considered who controls the narrative amid conflicting gender perspectives. This line of inquiry prompted questions about educators' roles in reinforcing or challenging gender norms.

In my research journal, I critically reflected on power constructs, dominant voices, and the Foucauldian concept of controlling the narrative. This contemplation extended to educators' roles in perpetuating or challenging gendered discourses. Examining educator transcripts, I sought insights into assumptions about student cohorts, considering how educators wield power over knowledge and contribute to crystallising stratified positions in students' choices and perceived struggles.

In revisiting practitioner interviews, a focus on recollections of student experiences and early careers revealed a network map (see Figure 4.12). This re-analysis illuminated the intricate and often contradictory influences shaping individuals within the architectural ecosystem, emphasising the complex nature of entrepreneurial identity and behaviour. This process raised awareness of the intricate power dynamics at play and the potential impact of educators on shaping gendered narratives.

Engaging in reflexive practice prompts a thoughtful examination of the influence of networking and placement opportunities on creative career trajectories, particularly how these advantages may disproportionately benefit students with high social capital. Reflecting on my research journal, I delve into a personal analysis, contemplating how my disposition, marked by shyness and a lack of confidence during my late teens and early twenties, might have impeded my ability to leverage such opportunities. These personal reflections highlight the resonance of my experiences with those of many students in higher education, inviting broader considerations about institutional structures within higher education and the potential perpetuation of existing norms. While acknowledging the educators' dedication to providing a stellar learning experience, I question whether assumptions about students' social capital and motivations, a theme not extensively explored in the interviews, may be prevalent within academia.

In line with Critical Realism theory, which encourages a nuanced understanding of underlying structures including the social, economic, and institutional context in which entrepreneurial activities take place (Hu, 2018) and causal effects, I recognise the need to investigate whether educators are making assumptions about students' social capital and motivations. James, among the educators, offered insights into the challenges faced by atypical students, prompting further inquiry into the potential existence of broader assumptions within academic circles. I contemplated the intersectionality of social capital and motivation, recognising the possibility that assumptions may be gendered and contribute to disparate outcomes for students in creative careers. These reflections extend beyond personal experiences, echoing the importance of reflexivity in research, as emphasised by James and Vinnicombe (2002: 97).

My reflections extended to considerations of the broader implications of the higher education landscape on students' educational choices and experiences. I contemplated whether gendered expectations and societal norms played a role in shaping students' decisions regarding their educational paths. This perspective expands the inquiry into the potential intersectionality of the interconnected nature between social class, gender, and educational choices (Hankivsky, 2014), recognising that students from more advantaged social class backgrounds may navigate educational opportunities differently.

In aligning with Boliver's (2011) observations on persistent inequalities in higher education despite increased student numbers, my reflections deepen the exploration of how social class dynamics intersect with broader discourses to shape students' motivations. This prompts a call for a critical examination of the structural conditions that perpetuate educational inequalities and impact students' choices within the higher education landscape. As a dedicated researcher delving into the intricate dynamics of educational systems, these reflections highlight the imperative for a nuanced comprehension of the multifaceted factors that shape student behaviours and choices. They also underscore the ongoing importance of exploring the roles played by societal expectations, gender norms, and social class in influencing students' educational trajectories (Ball et al., 2002). This critical inquiry significantly contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities inherent in the interplay between higher education narratives, student motivations, and societal structures.

Chapter Seven: Discussion and Conclusion

7.1. Introduction

This chapter serves as the culmination of an exploration into the nexus between higher education, entrepreneurial endeavours, and gender dynamics within the creative industries. Rooted in a robust framework that blends Critical Realism and Social Constructivism, this study delves deeply into the gendered nuances shaping the educational and professional trajectories of aspiring and established creatives.

With gender from a social constructionist perspective as the central axis, the research probes the structural underpinnings within higher education and creative realms to unravel how they disproportionately impact female creative discipline students and female creative practitioners. Against the vibrant backdrop of the architecture and photography sectors, the study endeavours to unearth the intricate interplay between gender dynamics, educational paradigms and entrepreneurial outcomes.

This research transcends mere inquiry, aiming to catalyse a paradigm shift in how we perceive and navigate the landscape of creative discipline education. It champions a confident assertion - that understanding and addressing gender disparities is not just imperative but transformative. It calls for a reimagining of educational frameworks, one that celebrates diversity, fosters inclusivity, and empowers all individuals, regardless of gender, to realise their fullest creative potential within the dynamic tapestry of the creative industries.

The research study had three main research objectives:

- To identify factors that influence and contribute to career preparation and potential entrepreneurial identity formation.
- To examine factors in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes and career preparation in creative disciplines in higher education.

- To explore whether there is a gender perspective in the factors shaping entrepreneurial outcomes.

7.2. Main results and contribution to knowledge.

This study builds upon Carey's (2013) PhD research by incorporating the perspectives of creative discipline students and creative discipline educators alongside those of creative practitioners, spanning two distinct creative sectors. In alignment with Carey's work, the findings of this study underscore the significance of creative identity as a driving force behind entrepreneurial endeavours. The study builds upon Carey’s research on the significance of creative identity by further expanding this concept to categorise creative identity into typologies. Furthermore, the study aligns with the research of Randles and Ballantyne (2018), Frey and Jegen (2001), Schediwy, Bhansing, and Loots (2018), Beech et al. (2016), Coulson (2012), Umney and Kretsos (2014), Uddin et al. (2019), McRobbie (1998), Taylor and Littleton (2008), and Gregg (2011), which highlights the inherent tension that creative workers face in reconciling their artistic vision with the commercial imperatives of their craft. The study findings build upon this knowledge to identify that the inherent tension that creative workers face is often underpinned by a practical recognition that to work professionally as a creative in a role they love they need to commercialise the imperatives of their craft.

7.2.1. Theoretical contributions of the study

The nexus between creative identity and entrepreneurial identity

Exploring the intricate relationship between creative identity and entrepreneurial identity, this study delves into the multifaceted dynamics at play, shedding light on how creative professionals navigate the tension between their artistic aspirations and the commercial realities of their field. Delving deeper into this discourse unveils a nuanced understanding wherein creative individuals often adopt a pragmatic approach to harmonize their artistic vision with the demands of the market.

The research reveals that participants actively engage in reflective practices, demonstrating agency in shaping their identities as creative individuals. Through conscious contemplation of their actions, they contribute to the construction of their social identity within the creative sphere (Section 5.2.1). This acknowledgement underscores the complexity of the interplay between personal agency and external influences in the formation of creative identity.

Furthermore, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on creative identity by proposing a classification system that integrates both creative and entrepreneurial identities along a spectrum (Section 5.3.1.). This classification enriches our understanding by delineating typologies that illustrate the diverse ways in which individuals reconcile their creative and entrepreneurial pursuits. Drawing upon prior literature, including works by Randles and Ballantyne (2018), Carey (2013), and Frey and Jegen (2001), the research expands upon existing frameworks to offer a more comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between creative expression and entrepreneurial endeavour.

Informal Recruitment Practices and Networking in the Creative Industries

Informal recruitment practices and reliance on social networks are predominant avenues for securing employment within the creative industries (Wreyford, 2015; Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012; Blair, 2001; Connor et al.; Flegel and Roth, 2014). These practices have varying implications for men and women, often leading to the exclusion of a more diverse range of individuals, particularly women (Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012). This matters as informal recruitment practices often favour the status quo and maintain homophily. The consequence of this action means that the opportunity to diversify the creative industries becomes more limited. This is significant because it limits opportunities for diversification within the creative industries, hindering efforts to foster inclusivity and equality.

In the field of architecture, informal recruitment practices are prevalent, starting from university settings where practising architects visit as guest lecturers to scout for potential talent for their firms. Conversely, in photography, informal recruitment practices within university settings are less common, as most photographers work freelance and are not actively seeking new employees. Instead, informal networking and horizon scanning for future opportunities (Bilton, Eikhof and Gilmore, 2020) serve as the primary methods for finding work in this sector.

Examples from the study illustrate how informal networking extends beyond scanning for future opportunities, involving seeking advice and guidance from contacts during times of business turmoil (Section 5.4.3.). Differences in networking aims were observed based on the stage of freelance careers, with practitioners initially utilising their networks for practical business setup tasks, such as completing tax returns (Section 5.4.3.).

Recognising the profound implications of informal recruitment practices and networking within the creative industries is crucial. These practices significantly influence access to opportunities and career advancement, shaping the trajectory of individuals within these fields.

Gendered Division and Freelance Work in Architecture

The existing literature on the creative industries highlights a persistent gendered division in the roles undertaken by women, reinforcing entrenched industry norms over time (Conor, Gill and Taylor, 2015; Dodd, 2012; Henry, 2009; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2015; Pratt and Jeffcutt, 2009; Bielby, 2009; French, 2014; Jones and Pringle, 2015; Wing-Fai, Gill and Randle, 2005; Wreyford, 2015; Connor, 2010; O'Brien, 2014). This study contributes to this discourse by identifying a pronounced gender disparity within the architecture sector, where both male and female participants often opt for freelance work to circumvent toxic masculine work environments (Section 5.4.5.).

Moreover, this study sheds light on the repercussions of this trend, particularly on female architects' career progression. The shift to freelance work tends to limit architects' advancement to smaller-scale projects, as larger commercial endeavours are typically awarded to large international firms. This limitation disproportionately affects female architects, who may opt to reduce their workload following childbirth, hindering their career advancement compared to their counterparts who remain within company structures (The Future of Women in Architecture report, 30 September 2021). Thus, this study's contribution lies in elucidating how gender disparities manifest within the architecture sector and the subsequent implications for career trajectories.

Gendered Nature of Entrepreneurship

The study contributes to the discourse surrounding entrepreneurship as a gendered profession (Ahl, 2004; Marlow and Patton, 2005; Lewis, 2006; Brush et al., 2009.). This study expands on this knowledge with findings from the interviews with female creative entrepreneurs. Female participants from both architecture and photography sectors shared narratives of encountering sexist comments and behaviours, ranging from overt remarks to gendered assumptions about their capabilities, such as questioning their equipment knowledge (Section 5.2.2.). In response to such behaviour, this study identified that the female participants developed behavioural and emotional strategies to navigate these challenges (Section 5.4.1.).

The day-to-day gendered treatment experienced by women contributes to the broader discourse on female entrepreneurs being viewed as 'other' within the entrepreneurial landscape (Jones and Clifton, 2018). This underscores the influence of masculinised discourses, policies, and practices that perpetuate institutional gender subordination. This study highlights the systemic gender biases and challenges faced by female creative entrepreneurs, emphasising the need to address gender inequalities and foster more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems. This study argues that by addressing the gender biases and challenges faced by female creative entrepreneurs is not only a matter of fairness but also a strategic imperative for driving economic growth, fostering innovation, promoting social equity, and creating a more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Importance of Passion in Creative Industries

The study builds upon the existing knowledge that passion for one's creative field is a crucial driver in pursuing a career in the creative industries (Carey and Matlay, 2007; Brown, 2009). This study builds upon the existing knowledge by asserting that this aspect is strongly emphasised and nurtured by creative discipline educators (Chapter 6). The educators who participated in the study recognised the significance of fostering students' passion, as it forms the foundation of their creative journey and professional growth. The educators who participating in the study believed that fostering creative passion encourages exploration and innovation of creative practice within a supportive environment (Chapter 6). This finding underscores the importance of educators in nurturing students' passion for their creative field, as it not only drives career pursuit but also fosters innovation and professional growth within the creative industries. This study also identified that passion for one’s creative field is a crucial driver for pursuing a career in the creative industries and often starts within childhood (Section 4.2.).

Role of Creative Discipline Educators

Educators draw from their own career experiences to provide invaluable mentorship, offering guidance and practical assistance to empower students in shaping their professional paths as identified by previous literature (Carey and Naudin, 2006; Carey and Matlay, 2007; Facer, 2011). This study builds on existing knowledge to explore the pivotal role of creative discipline educators in leveraging human agency to navigate the complex structures shaping career trajectories (Section 6.2.3). This study found that by sharing insights and offering tailored advice, educators enable students to navigate challenges and seize opportunities in the dynamic landscape of the creative industries. This research expands on previous knowledge by highlighting the specific role of creative discipline educators in leveraging their own experiences to empower students, providing personalised guidance and support to navigate the complexities of the creative industries (Section 6.3.4.)

Potential Unconscious Biases in Higher Education Creative Discipline Educators

The study identified potential biases within some higher education creative discipline educators, particularly concerning the perception of entrepreneurship (Section 6.5.). Research suggests the presence of unconscious biases, wherein entrepreneurship is often associated with male, privileged individuals who are more visible within the entrepreneurial landscape (Fiarman, 2016; Ahl and Marlow, 2012, 2019). This bias may inadvertently disadvantage female students, as they may be perceived as not fitting the 'normative form' of entrepreneur and therefore needing additional support or guidance to succeed in their entrepreneurial endeavours (Section 6.5.). Recognising and addressing these biases is crucial to creating an inclusive educational environment where all students, regardless of gender or background, are supported and empowered to pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations.

7.2.2. Policy implications and policy contributions

Policy Implications for Creative Discipline Higher Education Pedagogy

Female architecture students expressed concerns in the survey (Section 4.5.1.) regarding the negative impact of their gender on future career success. This is crucial to ensure that the increasing number of female students entering the field translates into a higher proportion of female chartered architects to prevent the perpetuation of the 'leaky pipeline' issue. Challenges and biases faced by female architects in the profession (Section 5.2.4.) underscore the importance of addressing issues such as the gender ratio among teaching staff (Smith, 2008). Female educators play a crucial role in normalising female representation in architecture, fostering a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, and encouraging more females to enter the profession.

In the discipline of photography, while gender dynamics may still be relevant, data from the student survey (Section 4.5.1) suggests that female photography students express fewer concerns about the impact of their gender on future career success compared to their counterparts in architecture.

Value of Assessment Techniques in Mirroring Real-World Interactions

Expanding on Carey's work, the study underscores the importance of assessment techniques that replicate real-world client-practitioner interactions. This study identified that even decades after graduation, practitioners continue to emphasise the value of critical reflection skills and the ability to critique their work (Section 4.4.1.). This finding can enhance professional preparedness, as creative discipline educators can utilise assessment techniques that simulate real-world scenarios to prepare students for their future careers better. This study highlights the long-term relevance of the enduring importance of critical reflection and critique skills in professional practice, emphasising the need for educators to incorporate these elements into their teaching methods. Assessment methods that mirror real-world interactions ensure that students develop skills and competencies that align with industry standards and expectations.

Implications for Creative Industry Policy the Vital Role of Networks

This study highlights the crucial function of networks in supporting creative workers, particularly during freelancing and economic instability (Section 5.4.3.) and concurs with existing literature (for example, Lioukas and Voudouris, 2020; Bilton, Eikhof and Gilmore, 2020). Networking provides a critical pathway for professional advancement which enables creative professionals to enhance visibility, expand professional circles, and access a broader range of opportunities. Networks help individuals stay informed about industry trends and developments, positioning them strategically in the competitive landscape (Section 5.4.3.).

Networks facilitate access to employment opportunities but can also serve as a mechanism for social closure within creative industries. This study expands on the current literature to suggest there is a potential for social exclusion, as certain networks may unintentionally exclude individuals based on socio-economic background, ethnicity, or gender, perpetuating existing inequalities. This underscores the need for policies that promote inclusive networking practices and encourage diversity within professional networks.

Creative discipline educators play a role in fostering an understanding of the dual nature of networking and promoting inclusive practices among future creative professionals. The findings of this study indicate that educators can incorporate the development of networking skills into their curriculum to prepare students for the realities of the creative industries. Educators can advocate for policy interventions that address inequalities in networking opportunities within creative sectors, ensuring a more equitable and vibrant ecosystem for their students and future creative practitioners.

Importance of School Education

This study identified that school education plays a crucial role in shaping young people's career aspirations and developing their creative identity from an early age (Erikson, 1968) (Section 4.2.2). Effective career guidance in schools can help students explore diverse career paths (Jarvis, 1994) and understand the opportunities available within the creative industries.

This study argues that offering a diverse range of subjects in schools, including both humanities and science, is essential for nurturing creativity and providing students with a well-rounded education. Exposure to different disciplines allows students to explore their interests and strengths, paving the way for future career choices. For aspiring architects and other creative professionals, access to subjects required for undergraduate degree courses is vital. Comprehensive educational pathways and support mechanisms ensure that students have the necessary resources and opportunities to pursue their chosen career paths effectively.

Education policies that prioritise a holistic approach to learning, encompassing both creative and technical subjects, support the development of well-rounded individuals capable of thriving in diverse career fields. Policies promoting equitable access to educational resources and opportunities ensure that all students, regardless of background or circumstances, have the chance to explore and pursue their creative aspirations. By aligning school curricula with the demands of the creative industries and providing robust career guidance, education policies can better prepare young people for successful careers in creative fields.

7.2.3. Methodological contributions of the study

Critical Realism and Social Constructivism

This study employed the philosophical assumptions of Critical Realism (Bhaskar, 1975, 1978; Sayer, 1984; Archer, 2007; Danermark et al., 2002, 2019; Maxwell, 2012; Pawson, 2013) alongside the theory of Social Constructivism. Critical Realism offers a framework for understanding the underlying structures and mechanisms shaping social phenomena (Archer, 2007). Social Constructivism challenged fixed notions of gender identity, highlighting the socially constructed nature of gender roles and identities (Butler, 1990; West and Zimmerman, 1987).

This methodological approach allowed the study to delve beyond surface-level observations and uncover the deeper causal mechanisms behind the observed structure and dynamics within the context of creative industries and higher education. By integrating Critical Realism and Social Constructivism, the study offered a methodological framework for analysing the complex interplay between social structures, individual agency, and gender dynamics. This comprehensive approach enriched our understanding of the phenomena under investigation and provided valuable insights into the complexities of social phenomena within educational and professional contexts.

Reflexivity and Researcher Positionality

Reflexivity and researcher positionality played integral roles in the research process, influencing outcomes, and contributing to nuanced understanding (Harding et al., 1987). Researchers engaged in constant self-questioning and reflection, challenging their own beliefs and thoughts throughout the research journey (Archer, 2009). Utilising research diaries as primary data sources facilitated reflexivity, enabling researchers to capture insights into their own thought processes and interpretations (Nadin and Cassell, 2006).

This methodological approach which is not widely used in studies on entrepreneurship allowed the researcher to acknowledge and address their own biases and assumptions, enhancing the credibility and validity of the study's findings. By actively engaging in reflexivity, the researcher was able to critically examine their perspectives and interpretations, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

Integration of Methodologies

The integration of Critical Realism, Social Constructivism, and reflexivity provided a comprehensive lens for exploring complex research topics. This methodological approach offered a rich framework for understanding the intricacies of gender dynamics and career trajectories within the creative industries. The integration of these methodologies provided a framework for investigating the complex interplay between gender, social structures, and career trajectories within the creative industries, contributing to a deeper understanding of these dynamics and their implications for individuals and society.

Implications for Future Research

The study's innovative methodological approach suggests opportunities for future researchers to leverage this combination of methodologies in various fields of inquiry. By integrating Critical Realism, Social Constructivism, and reflexivity, researchers can deepen understanding and insights into complex social phenomena, providing a more nuanced analysis of underlying structures and processes (Archer, 2007; Butler, 1990; Nadin and Cassell, 2006).

7.3. Reflection on the personal and professional development of the researcher

Smith and Martin (2014) emphasise the importance of skills in reflection and lifelong learning for professionals, highlighting that ongoing development hinges on these abilities. In this section, I will reflect on my personal and professional growth during this study.

Self-reflexivity, as discussed by scholars like Archer (2007), Caetano (2017), Hibbert, Coupland, and Macintosh (2010), and Hibbert, Beech, and Siedlok (2017), involves understanding one's patterns of change and development concerning the world.

Critical reflexivity, as discussed by Aronowitz et al. (2015), Hibbert, Beech, and Siedlok (2017), Hibbert, Coupland, and Macintosh (2010), and Hibbert and Huxham (2010, 2011), delves into how our interpretations of the world are shaped by social constructs such as tradition and ideology. Unlike self-reflexivity, which involves unconscious adaptation, critical reflexivity aims to challenge and disrupt the foundations of our interpretations and actions based on our experiences.

As outlined in Section 3.3.4., my perspective on the research study is that of an outsider, as I have no prior experience working as an architect or photographer, or within the creative industries. This outsider perspective offers certain advantages in research, as noted by Mullings (1999), who highlights the potential for greater objectivity and the ability to uncover hidden meanings and cultural nuances. Indeed, my position enabled me to ask probing questions that insiders may have overlooked. However, being an insider also has advantages, such as the ability to establish rapport with participants more easily (O’Connor, 2004) and a deeper understanding of their lived realities (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). Over time, I have acquired a greater understanding of both creative sectors and the creative industries. Additionally, I have developed valuable academic skills, including critical thinking and writing, enhancing my effectiveness in research activities such as literature review. This process of critical reflection has contributed to my growth as a researcher, enabling me to approach my work more thoughtfully and efficiently.

While reflexivity undoubtedly enhanced both the study's quality and my skills as a researcher, I found the process to be highly challenging. Hertz (1997) describes reflexivity as pervasive, permeating all aspects of the research process, wherein the researcher scrutinises what they know and how they know it. Dowling (2006) further explores feminist reflexivity, questioning whether the researcher inadvertently imposes their gender views on the participants, potentially biasing the interview and analysis processes. Navigating reflexivity was not a straightforward task. I frequently revisited the raw data to ensure that the narrative presented was not merely the one I wished to convey but accurately reflected the experiences of the participants who generously contributed their time to the study. This ongoing process of self-examination and critical reflection was integral to maintaining the integrity and validity of the research findings.

7.4. Limitations of the study.

Like all studies, this research has its limitations. One notable limitation is that the researcher did not systematically collect data on participants' socio-economic background, sexual orientation, and ethnicity. This data would have provided a more nuanced understanding of the experiences of the participants, particularly the creative practitioners. Despite this limitation, the sample collected data on gender and encompassed individuals at various career stages and across different vocations, including students, creative practitioners, and higher education educators. Additionally, including participants from three distinct universities aimed to mitigate the study's contextual specificity. Thus, while acknowledging these limitations, the study strived to maximise the richness of the data gathered.

7.5. Recommendations for future research

Building upon the study's findings and recognising its limitations, the researcher has identified three areas for future research:

1. **Exploring the impact of the socio-economic background, sexual orientation, and ethnicity of participants to examine whether these factors influence career aspirations and opportunities**: Exploring the influence of socio-economic background, sexual orientation, and ethnicity on career aspirations and opportunities, especially during the formative stages of creative identity development in early childhood, could provide valuable insights into crucial dynamics. Researchers could delve into a broader spectrum of attributes to investigate potential correlations with individuals' creative and entrepreneurial identities.
2. **Investigating the role of lecturing staff**: The study highlighted concerns about the gender disparity among lecturing staff in and its potential implications for students' viewpoints. Future research could delve deeper into the roles of lecturers, considering their gender and the roles they embody as mentors and role models. This exploration could shed light on how lecturers shape the formation of creative and entrepreneurial identities, providing valuable insights into educational strategies.
3. **Examining creative discipline education as a model for teaching enterprise**: The study revealed participants' varied perspectives on identifying as entrepreneurs, yet they displayed entrepreneurial traits inherent in their creative professions. While shedding light on how creative discipline education influences entrepreneurial outcomes, the study also prompted inquiries into the effectiveness of this pedagogy in fostering individuals' entrepreneurial skills and attributes. Future research could

further explore the nature of creative discipline education and its potential impacts on entrepreneurship.

By addressing these areas in future research endeavours, scholars can contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics shaping career pathways and educational practices within the creative industries.

7.6. Final Remarks

This thesis provides a comprehensive exploration of the intricate dynamics shaping career trajectories and entrepreneurial outcomes within the creative industries, with a central focus on gender disparities. Through the integration of Critical Realism, Social Constructivism, and reflexivity, the study offers a nuanced understanding of how structural dynamics intersect with individual agency to influence career pathways in fields such as architecture and photography.

The findings underscore the pivotal role of higher education institutions and educators in shaping students' creative identity and entrepreneurial intentions. Educators play a crucial role in nurturing students' passion, providing mentorship, and offering practical guidance to navigate the complexities of the creative industries. However, biases within educational settings, particularly concerning perceptions of entrepreneurship and gender, highlight the need for proactive measures to create inclusive learning environments.

In addition, I suggest a comprehensive investigation into the assumptions educators make about students' social capital and motivations, aiming to uncover the causal effects of these assumptions on students' motivation and pursuit of opportunities in creative careers. This aligns with my commitment to shedding light on the intricate dynamics of social structures within educational settings, ensuring a more nuanced understanding of the challenges students face in their professional journeys. By interrogating these assumptions, we can better address disparities and biases that may inadvertently hinder students' access to resources and opportunities, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and supportive educational environment. This avenue of inquiry holds promise for enhancing educational policies and practices to better serve the diverse needs and aspirations of students in the creative industries.

Furthermore, the study sheds light on the significance of informal networks in supporting creative workers, emphasising both the opportunities and challenges they present. Networking serves as a vital pathway for accessing employment opportunities and professional growth but can also perpetuate social closure and inequalities within the industry. Policies aimed at promoting inclusive networking practices and addressing biases are essential for fostering diversity and equity within the creative ecosystem.

Additionally, the research underscores the importance of effective career guidance in schools and the need for comprehensive educational pathways to support aspiring creative professionals. Addressing gender disparities and challenging entrenched industry norms are crucial steps toward creating a more equitable and vibrant creative landscape.

In summary, this thesis contributes to advancing knowledge in the field by offering valuable insights into the complex interplay of factors influencing career trajectories and entrepreneurial outcomes within the creative industries. By illuminating the challenges and opportunities faced by individuals, educators, and policymakers, this research lays the groundwork for future initiatives aimed at fostering diversity, inclusion, and innovation within the dynamic realm of creative practice.

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Appendix A. – Mapping Research Objectives and Literature Review Findings Against Questionnaire Survey Questions and Structured Interview Questions

Objective	Questions – Survey	Questions – Interview (Practitioners)	Questions – Interview (Educators)
To identify factors in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes from a gender perspective. **Role Models** **Culture**	I have met some very inspirational teaching staff and practitioners on this degree programme. My gender will make no difference or impact on my opportunities to gain projects/work and future career success. Within the tutors/educators on this programme there are some good female role models. Going back to your response on the question about the impact of your gender, would you be prepared to expand on your reasons for your response? (OPEN QUESTION)	5. Who were your role models when you started out? 8. Do you feel your gender has made any difference or impact upon your career and career trajectory? 9. What advice would you give today to a graduate starting out in this industry based on your experience?	9. As you may be aware my study is looking at the creative industries from a gender perspective, do you think that female students have a different undergraduate experience or work different work opportunities to their male counterparts?
To identify factors in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes in creative disciplines in	There have been opportunities to work within the industry whilst I have been studying. During my studies I have been provided with opportunities to	1. How did your university experience prepare you for obtaining work in your chosen industry? 2. Whilst you were at university did you have opportunities to meet and work with people who were	1. Tell me a little about your career background and how you got into teaching? 3.What assessment techniques do you use on the degree programme? 4. Do you invite external people into either mentor the students, assess student work and/or give presentations?

Higher Education. **Assessment techniques** **Work Opportunities/ Environment**	meet and gain contacts with people working in the industry. The degree programme assessment techniques have helped prepare me for real-life situations that I may encounter in a working environment. The degree programme curriculum has included developing business skills and/or entrepreneurial skills There have been opportunities to present or showcase my work to my peers and/or others? How has the course prepared you for obtaining work within your chosen industry? (OPEN QUESTION)	already working in the industry? 3. Did the assessment techniques used on your degree course help prepare you for real life situations that you have since encountered in your working environment?	7. Can you spot students early on who have real potential to be a great photographer/architect and what is it about them that gives you this impression? 8. Given the industry has a high proportion of freelance workers do you consider entrepreneurial skills are important part of the curriculum for students wishing to work in this industry? 10. We are all working with constraints due to lack of resources etc, if you could wave a magic wand and change something about the degree programme to improve it, what would it be?
To explore the factors that contribute to career and potential entrepreneurial identity formation and what influences this.	Overall, my degree programme has developed my skills and knowledge for necessary for my future career. I feel confident my degree programme has provided me with the skills, knowledge and attitude to set up my own company	4.Did your university experience support your in developing the skills, knowledge and attitude required to work freelance? 6. You work freelance – do you think of yourself as an entrepreneur? 7. What area of photography/architecture do you specialise in and how would you describe your style?	2. Do you solely work in HE these days or do you also undertake paid work as a photographer/architect? 5. How do you prepare students for working in the industry? 6. Do you formally teach business skills and/or entrepreneurial skills as part of the curriculum? Or, do you endeavour to embed this within the both the curriculum and assessment techniques?

Characteristics and behaviours **Creative identity** **Entrepreneurial identity**	or becoming self-employed if I choose. I believe I have the capacity to be successful as freelancer/self-employed in my future career. I see myself as a prospective entrepreneur. In your future career what would success look like for you? (Open Question)	10. In terms of your future career what would success look like for you?	11. What makes a great photographer/architect?

Appendix B. Ethics approval

Evangelist Pragasam
<Evangelist.Pragasam@bcu.ac.uk> on behalf of
BLSS Ethics <blssethics@bcu.ac.uk>
Mon 11/12/2017 16:44

To:Jacqueline Jenkins <Jacqueline.Jenkins@mail.bcu.ac.uk>;

Dear Jacqueline,

Thank you for your application.

This has now been reviewed and your ethics application on has been approved by the Chair of the Research and Ethics Committee.
The application reference number is 170.17 and must be mentioned in the subject for any communications regarding your ethics application.

Best Wishes,

Evangelist Pragasam MSc, BCom.
Ethics Administrator
Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences

Birmingham City University
The Curzon Building
4 Cardigan Street
Birmingham
B4 7BD

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T: +44 (0)121 202 8642

BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

Appendix C. Consent Form

BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

CONSENT FORM

Full title of Project: Creative discipline education shaping entrepreneurial outcomes within the creative industries; a gender perspective

Name, position and contact address of Researcher: Jacqueline Jenkins, Doctoral Student, Business School, Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences, Birmingham City University, Birmingham B5 5JU

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.	☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.	☐
3. I agree to take part in the above study.	☐

Please initial box

	Yes	No
4. I agree to the interview / focus group being audio recorded	☐	☐
6. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications	☐	☐
7. I agree that my data gathered in this study may be stored (after it has been anonymised) in a specialist data centre and may be used for future research.	☐	☐

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix D. Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

Creative discipline education shaping entrepreneurial outcomes within the creative industries; a gender perspective

Please take some time to read this information and ask questions if anything is unclear. Contact details can be found at the end of this document.

What is the purpose of this study?
This study aims to examine the nature of creative discipline education and consider the following questions: Is creative discipline education gendered? And what impact does this have on entrepreneurial outcomes within the creative industries? This research asks what role higher education has played in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes of creative discipline students.

Who is organising this research?
The research for this study is being undertaken by Jacqueline Jenkins who is a doctoral student at Birmingham City University. Birmingham City University Research Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved this research.

Why have I been chosen?
By completing the interview this project hopes to provide some insights into how creative discipline education shapes entrepreneurial outcomes within the creative industries from a gender perspective. We aim to interview several participants from the creative industries.

Do I have to take part?
Participation in this study is voluntary and you may ask the researcher questions before agreeing to participate. However, we believe that your contribution will assist in providing some insights into how your degree course may help to support and shape your career, and pose the question, to what extent do you consider yourself entrepreneurial. However, at any time, you are free to withdraw from the study and if you choose to withdraw, we will not ask you to give any reasons.

What will happen to me if I take part?
If you agree to take part in this study, we will interview you and audio record the interview. The interview will be conducted by Jacqueline Jenkins and will last around 60 minutes. We may ask you to participate in a follow-up interview, though participation in this is optional.

What are the possible benefits of participating?
This research will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of this field by better understanding factors that may adversely affect female undergraduate students in the creative disciplines, in shaping their entrepreneurial outcomes. Identifying whether creative discipline education is gendered contributes to potentially shaping creative disciplines pedagogies by a better understanding of the factors that support and nurture female creative discipline students' entrepreneurial outcomes.

What are the possible risks of taking part?
While we hope that your experience will be pleasant, however, reflecting on your career and career/life choices may make you uncomfortable. At any time during the interview you can choose to withdraw.

How will my interview be used?
On the consent form we will ask you to confirm that you are happy to assign your copyright for the interview to us, which means that you consent to the researcher using and quoting from your interview.

What will happen to the results of the project?

All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be identified in any reports or publications and your name and other personal information will be anonymised.

What happens to the interviews collected during the study?
Interviews will be audio recorded and stored digitally, managed by the researcher for the duration of the project. Only the researcher and supervisor will have access to the interviews and personal information.

What will happen to the results of the project?
All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be identified in any reports or publications and your name and other personal information will be anonymised.

What happens at the end of the project?
If you agree to participate in this project, the research will be written up as a thesis and disseminated via various means including conference papers and journal articles. You may request a summary of the research findings by contacting the researcher. On successful submission of the thesis, it will be deposited both in print and online at Birmingham City University, to facilitate its use in further research. The digital online copy of the thesis will be deposited with Birmingham City Open Research Archive and will be published with open access, meaning that it will be available to all internet users.

What about use of the data in future research?
If you agree to participate in this project, the research may be used by this researcher, other researchers and regulatory authorities for future research.

Contact for Further Information
The researcher on this study is Jacqueline Jenkins, email: Jacqueline.jenkins@mail.bcu.ac.uk. If you have any concerns about the way the research is conducted the lead supervisor is Dr Charlotte Carey, email: charlotte.carey@mail.bcu.ac.uk

Fair Processing Statement
The information which you supply, and which may be collected as part of the project will be entered into a filing system or database and will only be accessed by the researcher and supervisor involved in the project. The information will be retained by Birmingham City University and will only be used for the purpose of research, statistical and audit and possibly commercial purposes. By supplying this information, you are consenting to us storing your information for the purposes above. The information. will be processed for use in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. No identifiable data will be published.

Appendix E. Student Questionnaire Survey

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

CREATIVE DISCIPLINE EDUCATION SHAPING ENTREPRENEURIAL OUTCOMES WITHIN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES; A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Course Title………..………………………………………………….**Year of study**……………..

University………………………………………………………………………………….........

Please select gender:

Male		**Female**		**Other**		**Prefer not to say**	

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I have met some very inspirational teaching staff and practitioners on this degree programme.					
There have been opportunities to work within the industry whilst I have been studying.					
During my studies I have been provided with opportunities to meet and gain contacts with people working in the industry.					
Overall, my degree programme has developed my skills and knowledge for necessary for my future career.					
The degree programme curriculum has included developing business skills and/or entrepreneurial skills.					
I see myself as a prospective entrepreneur.					
I feel confident my degree programme has provided me with the skills, knowledge					

and attitude to set up my own company or becoming self-employed if I choose.					
I believe I have the capacity to be successful as freelancer/self-employed in my future career.					

Page 1 of 2 - Please turn over

	STRONGLY AGREE	**AGREE**	**UNCERTAIN**	**DISAGREE**	**STRONGLY DISAGREE**
There have been opportunities to present or showcase my work to my peers and/or others.					
The degree programme assessment techniques have helped prepare me for real-life situations that I may encounter in a working environment.					
Within the tutors/educators on this programme there are some good female role models.					
My gender will make no difference or impact on my opportunities to gain projects/work and future career success.					

Going back to your response on the question about the impact of your gender, please expand on your reasons for your response?
How has the course prepared you for obtaining work within your chosen industry?
In your future career what would success look like for you?

If you would be prepared to be contacted by the researcher for future participation in this research, please provide your contact details below. Please note this is optional. **Name:** **Email address:**

Thank you for taking part in this survey.

Appendix F. Interview Questions – Practitioners working in the creative industries

1. How did your university experience prepare you for obtaining work in your chosen industry?

2. Whilst you were at university did you have opportunities to meet and work with people who were already working in the industry?

3. Did the assessment techniques used on your degree course help prepare you for real life situations that you have since encountered in your working environment?

4. Did your university experience support your in developing the skills, knowledge and attitude required to work freelance?

5. Who were your role models when you started out?

6. You work freelance – do you think of yourself as an entrepreneur?

7. What area of photography/architecture do you specialise in and how would you describe your style?

8. Do you feel your gender has made any difference or impact upon your career and career trajectory?

9. What advice would you give today to a graduate starting out in this industry based on your experience?

10. In terms of your future career what would success look like for you?

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk to me today your insights and experiences are incredibly valuable in my research into understanding how we can better support undergraduates to reach their full career potential.

Jacqueline Jenkins

Appendix G. Interview Questions – Educators

1. Tell me a little about your career background and how you got into teaching?

2. Do you solely work in HE these days or do you also undertake paid work as a photographer/architect?

3. What assessment techniques do you use on the degree programme?

4. Do you invite external people into either mentor the students, assess student work and/or give presentations?

5. How do you prepare students for working in the industry?

6. Do you formally teach business skills and/or entrepreneurial skills as part of the curriculum? Or, do you endeavour to embed this within the both the curriculum and assessment techniques?

7. Can you spot students early on who have real potential to be a great photographer/architect and what is it about them that gives you this impression?

8. Given the industry has a high proportion of freelance workers do you consider entrepreneurial skills are important part of the curriculum for students wishing to work in this industry?

9. As you may be aware my study is looking at the creative industries from a gender perspective, do you think that female students have a different undergraduate experience or work different work opportunities to their male counterparts?

10. We are all working with constraints due to lack of resources etc, if you could wave a magic wand and change something about the degree programme to improve it, what would it be?

11. What makes a great photographer/architect?

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk to me today.

Jacqueline Jenkins

Appendix H. Example Interview Transcript

Interviewer: What did you study your undergraduate photography degree?

09FP5: I studied an undergraduate degree and a postgraduate degree at [name of university].

Interviewer: Did you do your photography degree from A levels, school?

09FP5: Yes, I went straight through, so I was eighteen.

Interviewer: Did you do the degree with the ambition to become a photographer?

09FP5: I got into photography when I was about 15, and I paid for some night school classes when I was a teenager. It was weird though the further in I got, if somebody asked me a year or two ago I probably would have said I don't want to be a photographer.

Interviewer: What was it that interested you in becoming a photographer, did you know any photographers?

09FP5: It was always a hobby, my [family member] is quite arty, she went to [name of art school], my [family member] used to buy old cameras from auctions and fix them up. My [family member] was doing a fashion degree and she needed some fashion photos of clothes that she had made, that was how I properly got into it.

Interviewer: A lot of family influence there and you seem quite a creative family.

09FP5: Yes, a lot of family influence.

Interviewer: What happened after you graduated from uni?

09FP5: I graduated and then I started looking at Masters, and I also looked at PGCEs. I wanted to go into teaching, but I thought I'd be better off doing an MA because I thought there was more I could do with an MA rather than just teaching.

Interviewer: Did you do your masters following graduation from your undergrad?

09FP5: Yes, I graduated in the summer then started the MA in the October?

Interviewer: When you graduate from your masters?

09FP5: I graduated from my undergraduate in 2015 and I think it was the following year 2016 I gradated from my masters. I ended up shooting a couple of weddings in between for some extra money. So I sort of got into it from there. I started pushing the wedding photography in 2016.

Interviewer: So you did both degrees at the same university how did they support you in finding work? I guess you have always worked freelance?

09FP5: Yes, I have.

Interviewer: Did they give you any support and guidance in finding work and getting clients?

09FP5: In the third year of my BA we had like a little business module, which was alright but I wouldn't say it helped me with starting and running my own business. It was more how to put an portfolio together, how to do a CV. I don't want to say it wasn't helpful but it wasn't focused on if you are going to go freelance this is how you go about it.

Interviewer: Were there any opportunities to meet people who were working as photographers during your undergraduate studies?

09FP5: We had a lot of guest artist doing seminars and lecturers. We had a visit from [female artist] I think she works in a photography gallery in [place name].

Interviewer: Was it interesting or inspirational to hear about their work and career?

09FP5: It was interesting to hear other people, they talked a lot about their work, it was more contextual than it was practical. It was more about the creative process and their creative approach then this is how I started out. If I'd stayed doing more arty photography I would have found it more useful than doing commercial, freelance sort of stuff.

Interviewer: How did they assess you on the course?

09FP5: Predominantly it was more projects at the beginning. So projects then a final art show at the end. In my masters I did 20,000 word assignment instead of taking photos which was a weird decision. The only way I can describe it is I love the practical side of photography so I love working with people and photographing people. I hated the art side of photography but I loved all the theory and the books and the reading so the contextual just not the taking photos of the things. During the BA we did weekly or biweekly crits.

Interviewer: Did you find that helpful

09FP5: I did find that helpful, I remember my third-year art show it didn't use any photos but did an installation piece. For the topics that I'd chosen just taking a photo wasn't enough for me. I wanted to go in another direction.

Interviewer: Do you think any of the assessments and the crits etc helped now you are working as a photographer?

09FP5: I'm probably more critical in my work. I can pick things apart quite easily. I guess my work now is more fine art because I did my degrees.

Interviewer: Did any aspect of your degrees equip you with the skills needed to work freelance?

09FP5: Maybe if I had spent time talking one-to-one with the lecturers. It sounds awful but none of them are making money from photography in the same way I am making money from it. So they are all photographers but more for their personal projects.

Interviewer: Who were your role models when you were starting out?

09FP5: We had one lecturer who I adored his work was on gender and how people are represented and that was what mine was to do with a lot of the time. Loved his work. Two of them actually. I wasn't the actual photos it was all the theory behind it. That was why I went to uni rather than learn how to operate a camera. I think a lot of people went to uni expected to be taught how to take pictures. I knew that wouldn't be the case. Before I did my BA I was influenced a lot by film and video. The more contextual theory I did the more I like people like Nan Goldin. I was always drawn to female photographers, especially because a lot of my work is to with feminism and how women are portrayed.

Interviewer: Does that perspective still shape your work today?

09FP5: Yes but it’s difficult with a wedding [pause] you want to make them look pretty and stuff because it’s their wedding and their one day, but I’m not drawn to the light, airy fairy kind of thing. I like darker moodier sort of stuff. It’s difficult with a wedding. It’s hard but when I go and meet clients I’m honest and open about how I work. I know when I’m not happy it shows in my work.

Interviewer: You mentioned earlier that if someone asked you a couple of years ago you said you didn’t want to be a photographer so what were the drivers in making you be one?

09FP5: I love the freelance running my own business aspect of photography. I love the practical aspect of photography where all I have to do is to take the pictures. Were as a couple of years ago I loved writing and I loved writing the dissertation of my MA. I like being my own boss, I like the freedom. When you run your own business no-one can tell you how to run it properly. I don’t mean properly but at the end of the day it is my business I run it how I want to.

Interviewer: How much do you think being a photographer is part of your identity?

09FP5: I think it has completely consumed me [laughs]. When I meet people it probably takes me about 10 seconds to tell them what I do. I think when people see me I guess I don’t look like a typical wedding photography I look quite alternative. I’m covered in tattoos and I’ve got like grey braids. So when I go ‘I’m a wedding photographer’ people are like ‘oh what’… I think it’s so funny. I don’t thrive well in a non-creative environment I get very bored very quickly.

Interviewer: Taking the creative and technical skills as a given what to you makes a really great photographer?

09FP5: I think even if you are not technically skills, you have to be passionate about what you are doing and know what you are doing and commit to it. I’ve seen photos and taken photos which are technically shit, but if you have captured the thing you wanted to capture sometimes it doesn’t matter if you get it technically wrong. The other way as well even if it is technically perfect is there is no soul to it, it’s just a picture. Capturing that moment or feeling. That’s why I like weddings, I guess. None of it is fake. Like I’m with art photography, although some of it is real, a lot of it is staged and I don’t like that. You are with the couple the whole day so get to really know them and see a whole range of different emotions.

Interviewer: I guess you have to build up a lot of trust with your clients?

09FP5: Yeah. Being helpful. I’m very honest when I meet people, if I don’t feel with have a good vibe I say I’m probably not the photographer for you because I have to be with them for 12 hours. I don’t do this job because it’s a job I do this job because I love it. Same the other way I say if you are not sure about me then don’t book me because it has to be a two-way partnership. I need to have the time to be creative and not feel rushed.

Interviewer: How do you go about getting new business, how do clients find you?

09FP5: I was looking at this the other day actually, the majority of my clients find me through social media. I get work of mouth through previous clients but I don’t get word of mouth through where I live because I’m not from here originally. If I was to move back home I would get a lot more work through friends and family.

Interviewer: Do you do any networking or anything like that?

09FP5: I like doing business networking I did one last year, it was like a three-day event and that was really good. I need to do more really.

Interviewer: What did you get out of it? Was it new business or sharing ideas about how to run your business?

09FP5: I got a bit of everything really. I think it was just nice to talk to people that are in the same boat. It's better if they are in a different business because they don't feel like you are trying to steal their business so you can just share ideas and support each other. Here we have BFI, which formed from business link and they have one of each business represented, you pay so much a month and they support and refer each other for new business so I'm looking to join up. They are expensive like a grand a year though but they look good. You do get strong referrals from them. It's one of those things that I've I got new business out of it say a wedding then it's paid for itself for the year.

Interviewer: You've been freelancing for a couple of years, do you see yourself as entrepreneurial?

09FP5: Yes, I'd like to think so anyway. Not sure how I can explain [long pause] I think even if I hadn't gone down the wedding photography route, I still would have like to have owned my own business. Do something creative. I know I wouldn't be happy just working in a job. Whatever I ended up doing I think it would have been my own business. The freedom of it, I like being my own boss, I like saying I run my own business. Everyone has a really short time on this planet so I may as well do something I want. I like being in control of my own destiny.

Interviewer: So how much is it part of your identity I guess you're not just doing it for the money?

09FP5: Oh no if I was just doing it for the money, I would do a different job. Yes it is so much part of my identity. Especially we wedding I love how fast paced they are, the structure of them is generally the same, no two things are every the same, I love the fact that you get to see people who are in love, even just for that one day. I love watching how stressed they are in the morning and going your going to be fine, it's all going to be fine. You see them at the end of the night and they are absolutely hammered normally it's absolutely hilarious. It all this fuss for one day but when they are 90 it's your photos they are going to be looking back on. That's a nice feeling I think.

Interviewer: How would you describe your photographic style?

09FP5: I get told that I'm quite quirky. Creative, romantic. I'm not romantic at all, I'm anti-social and covered in tattoos but my work comes out as fine art romantic. But hopefully just fun really. I tell my couples I don't want to make you stand there and pose for hours, you don't want to do that, I definitely don't want to do that, I'd rather we all just have fun and you have great photos afterwards.

Interviewer: As you know I'm interested in gender, I just wondered as a woman if you feel your career or career choices have been shaped by your gender?

09FP5: I think I'm lucky to do wedding photography being a woman because it's easier for a woman to relate. It's always the bride that books the groom just there and nods when ever he has to. I think it's one of the few careers where being a woman has actually helped me a little bit. So, I only do full days, I don't do half days, so if I'm there all day I'm going to help you put on your dress, help fix your hair, male photographers can obviously do that, but women tend to feel more comfortable with another women. So from first thing I'm there with them getting dressed. Same with the groom even if they are getting dressed they don't seem bothered about me being there. I feel if I was doing a different job it would be very different. I feel lucky.

Interviewer: If you met a young woman wanted to become a photographer what advice would you give them?

09FP5: Do as much research as you can. Really look at what you want to do and why you want to do it. I find even now I still research things on a daily basis. Keep researching even if you are not doing what you want to do, even taking pictures of your dog you are still learning how.

Interviewer: Would you suggest they did a photography degree?

09FP5: If they were wanting to go self-employed/freelance I don’t think you really need it. To be a wedding, portrait generally photography I don’t think a degree is going to help you massively. That’s not me being negative both my degrees I got firsts in so I have no reason to say everything bad about university as I have a good experience. Both I don’t think they helped in being able to run my own business. Maybe more career advice would have helped. I don’t think I had anything during my MA. More practical career advice that people are going to actually use.

Interviewer: In terms of your own business what would future success look like for you?

09FP5: I’d like to book and shoot the number of weddings I can comfortably do each year so I can live off just my wedding photography solely. Full-time. That is my goal.

Appendix I. Coding Frame

Discipline **Architecture = 1** **Photography = 2** **Pilot = 3**	**HEI West Midlands = 1** **HEI A East Midlands = 2** **HEI B East Midlands = 3**
Gender **Male = 0** **Female = 1** **Other = 2** **Prefer not to say = 3**	**Likert Questions All** **Strongly Agree = 1** **Agree = 2** **Uncertain = 3** **Disagree = 4** **Strongly Disagree = 5**
Variable 1	I have met some very inspirational teaching staff and practitioners on this degree programme.
Variable 2	There have been opportunities to work within the industry whilst I have been studying.
Variable 3	During my studies I have been provided with opportunities to meet and gain contacts with people working in the industry.
Variable 4	Overall, my degree programme has developed my skills and knowledge necessary for my future career.
Variable 5	The degree programme curriculum has included developing business skills and/or entrepreneurial skills.
Variable 6	I see myself as a prospective entrepreneur.
Variable 7	I feel confident my degree programme has provided me with the skills, knowledge and attitude to set up my own company or become self-employed if I choose.
Variable 8	I believe I have the capacity to be successful as freelancer/self-employed in my future career.
Variable 9	There have been opportunities to present or showcase my work to my peers and/or others.
Variable 10	The degree programme assessment techniques have helped prepare me for real-life situations that I may encounter in a working environment.
Variable 11	Within the tutors/educators on this programme there are some good female role models.
Variable 12	My gender will make no difference or impact on my opportunities to gain projects/work and future career success.
Open 1 Going back to your response to the question about the impact of your gender, please expand on your reasons for your response?	Yes discrimination = 0 No discrimination = 1 Neutral not sure = 2 No response = 99
Open 2 How has the course prepared you for obtaining work within your chosen industry?	Developing skills/knowledge/confidence = 1 Course tutors' support/input/guidance = 2 Placements/Internships = 3 Prep CV/Interview/Portfolio = 4 Course structure/models/prof practice mod = 5 Industry/practitioner contacts/networking/guest speakers/events = 6 External mentoring = 7 Found myself/not really = 8 Will pursue other avenues/options = 9
Open 3	Job that I love = 1

In your future career what would success look like for you?	Being successful architect/photographer promotion, respect from peers = 2 Continuously improving skills = 3 Freelance/own business = 4 Financially independent and stable = 5 Being contented and happy = 6 Creating splendid work = 7 Doing inspirational/worthwhile work = 8 Another career option = 9

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